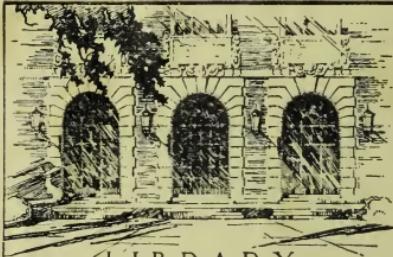


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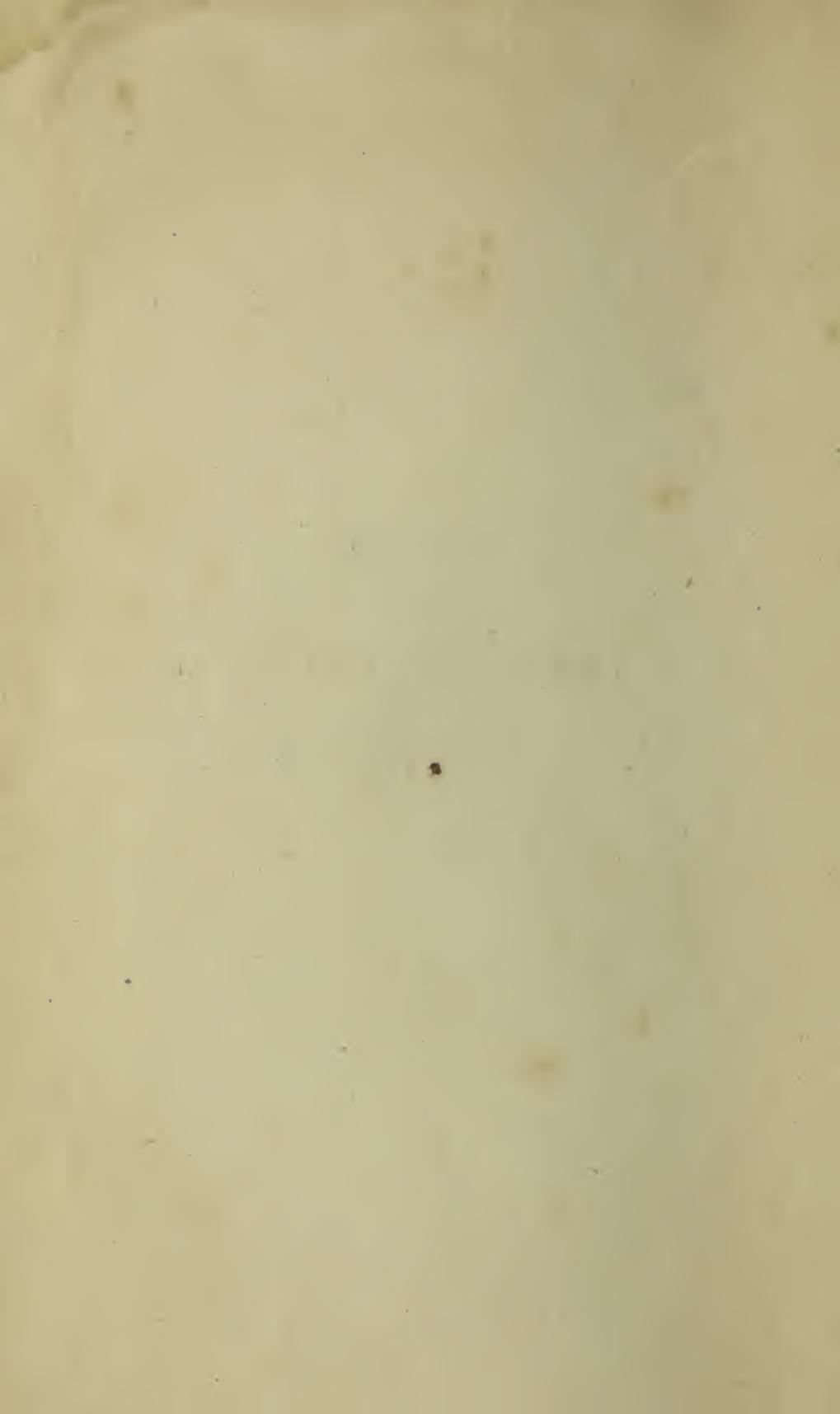
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LES MISÉRABLES.

VOL. III.



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LES MISÉRABLES.

BY

VICTOR HUGO.

AUTHORIZED ENGLISH TRANSLATION

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Third Edition.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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LES MISÉRABLES.

CHAPTER I.

THE ORIGIN OF SLANG.

“PIGRITIA” is a terrible word, for it engenders a world, *la pègre*, for which read—robbery; and a Hades, *la pégrenne*, for which read—hunger. Hence indolence is a mother, and has a son, robbery, and a daughter, hunger. Where are we at this moment? in slang. What is slang? it is at once the nation and the idiom, it is robbery in its two species, people and language. Four-and-thirty years ago, when the narrator of this grave and sombre history introduced into the middle of a work written with the same object as this one* a robber speaking slang, there was amazement and clamour. “Why! what! slang! why, it is frightful, it is the language of the chain-gang, of hulks and prisons, of everything that is the most abominable in society,” &c. &c. &c. We could never understand objections of this nature. Since that period two powerful romance-writers, of whom one was a profound observer of humanity, the other an intrepid friend of the people, Balzac and Eugène Sue, having made bandits talk in their natural tongue, as the author of “Le dernier Jour d'un Condamné” did in 1828, the same objections were raised, and people repeated,—“What do writers want with this repulsive patois? slang is odious, and produces a shudder.” Who denies it? of course it does. When the object is to probe a wound, a gulf, or a society, when did it become a fault to drive the probe too deep? we have always thought that it was sometimes an act of courage and at the very least a simple and useful action, worthy of the sympathetic attention which a duty accepted and carried out deserves. Why should we not explore and study every-

* Le dernier Jour d'un Condamné.

thing, and why stop on the way? Stopping is the function of the probe, and not of the prober.

Certainly it is neither an attractive nor an easy task to seek in the lowest depths of social order, where the earth leaves off and mud begins, to grope in these vague densities, to pursue, seize, and throw quivering on the pavement that abject idiom which drips with filth when thus brought to light, that pustulous vocabulary of which each word seems an unclean ring of a monster of the mud and darkness. Nothing is more mournful than thus to contemplate, by the light of thought, the frightful vermin swarm of slang in its nudity. It seems, in fact, as if you have just drawn from its sewer a sort of horrible beast made for the night, and you fancy you see a frightful, living, and bristling polype, which shivers, moves, is agitated, demands the shadow again, menaces, and looks. One word resembles a claw, another a lustreless and bleeding eye, and some phrases seem to snap like the pincers of a crab. All this lives with the hideous vitality of things which are organized in disorganization. Now, let us ask, when did horror begin to exclude study? or the malady drive away the physician? Can we imagine a naturalist who would refuse to examine a viper, a bat, a scorpion, a scolopendra, or a tarantula, and throw them into the darkness, saying, "Fie, how ugly they are!" The thinker who turned away from slang would resemble a surgeon who turned away from an ulcer or a wart. He would be a philologist hesitating to examine a fact of language, a philosopher hesitating to scrutinize a fact of humanity. For we must tell all those ignorant of the fact, that slang is at once a literary phenomenon and a social result. What is slang, properly so called? it is the language of misery.

Here we may, perhaps, be stopped; the fact may be generalized, which is sometimes a way of alternating it; it may be observed that every trade, every profession, we might also say all the accidents of the social hierarchy, and all the forms of intelligence, have their slang. The merchant who says, "Montpellier in demand, Marseille fine quality;" the broker who says, "carrying forward, and buying for the account;" the gambler who says, "pique, répique, and capote;" the usher of the Norman isles who says, "the holder in fee cannot make any claim during the hereditary seizure of the property of the mortgager;" the playwright who says, "the piece was goosed;" the actor who says, "I made a hit;" the philosopher who says, "phenomenal triplicity;" the sportsman who says, "a covey of partridges, a leash of woodcocks;" the phrenologist who says, "amativeness, combativeness, secretiveness;" the infantry

soldier who says, "my clarionette ;" the dragoon who says, "my turkey-cock ;" the fencing-master who says, "tierce, carte, disengage ;" the printer who says, "hold a chapel ;" all—printer, fencing-master, dragoon, infantry man, phrenologist, sportsman, philosopher, actor, playwright, gambler, stock-broker, and merchant—talk slang. The painter who says, "my grinder ;" the attorney who says, "my spring-over-the-gutter ;" the barber who says, "my clerk ;" and the cobbler who says, "my scrub,"—all talk slang. Rigorously taken, all the different ways of saying right and left, the sailor's larboard and starboard, the scene-shifter's off-side and prompt-side, and the beadle's Epistle-side and Gospel-side, are slang. There is the slang of the poppets as there was the slang of the precieuses, and the Hotel de Rambouillet bordered to some slight extent the Cour des Miracles. There is the slang of duchesses, as is proved by this sentence, written in a note by a very great lady and very pretty woman of the Restoration ; "Vous trouverez dans ces potains-là une foulitude de raisons pour que je me libertise."* Diplomatic cyphers are slang, and the Pontifical Chancery, writing 26 for "Rome," *grkztntgzyal* for "Envoy," and *abfxust-grnogrkzu tu XI.* for "the Duke of Modena," talk slang. The medieval physicians who, in order to refer to carrots, radishes, and turnips, said, *opoponach, perfroschinum, reptitalinus, dracatholicum angelorum*, and *postmegorum*, talk slang. The sugar-baker who says, "clarified lumps, molasses, bastard, common, burned, loaves,"—this honest manufacturer talks slang. A certain school of critics, who twenty years ago said, "one half of Shakespere is puns and playing on words," spoke slang. The poet and artist who with profound feeling would call M. de Montmorency a bourgeois, if he were not a connoisseur in verses and statues, talk slang. The classic academician who calls flowers Flora, the fruits Pomona, the sea Neptune, love the flames, beauty the charms, a horse a charger, the white or tricolour cockade the rose of Bellona, the three-cornered hat the triangle of Mars,—that classic academician talks slang. Algebra, medicine, and botany have their slang. The language employed on ship-board, that admirable sea-language so complete and picturesque, which Jean Bart, Dufresne, Suffren, and Duperré spoke, which is mingled with the straining of the rigging, the sound of the speaking-trumpets, the clang of boarding axe, the rolling, the wind, the gusts, and the cannon—is an heroic and brilliant slang, which is to the ferocious slang of robbers what the lion is to the jackal.

* "You will find in that tittle-tattle a multitude of reasons why I should take my liberty."

All this is perfectly true, but, whatever people may say, this mode of comprehending the word slang is an extension which everybody will not be prepared to admit. For our part, we perceive the precise circumscribed and settled acceptance of the word, and restrict slang to slang. The true slang, the slang *par excellence*, if the two words can be coupled, the immemorial slang which was a kingdom, is nothing else, we repeat, than the ugly, anxious, cunning, treacherous, venomous, cruel, blear-eyed, vile, profound, and fatal language of misery. There is at the extremity of all abasements and all misfortunes a last misery, which revolts and resolves to contend with the ensemble of fortunate facts and reigning rights: a frightful struggle, in which, at one moment crafty, at another violent, at once unhealthy and ferocious, it attacks the social order with pin-pricks by vice, and with heavy blows by crime. For the necessities of this struggle, misery has invented a fighting language, which is called slang. To hold up on the surface and keep from forgetfulness, from the gulf, only a fragment of any language, which man has spoken, and which would be lost, that is to say, one of the elements, good or bad, of which civilization is composed and complicated, is to extend the data of social observation and serve civilization itself. Plautus rendered this service, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, by making two Carthaginian soldiers speak Phœnician; Molière rendered it also by making so many of his characters talk Levantine and all sorts of patois. Here objections crop out afresh; Phœnician, excellent, Levantine, very good, and even patois may be allowed, for they are languages which have belonged to nations or provinces—but slang? of what service is it to preserve slang and help it to float on the surface?

To this we will only make one remark. Assuredly, if the language which a nation or a province has spoken is worthy of interest, there is a thing still more worthy of attention and study, and that is the language which a wretchedness has spoken. It is the language which has been spoken in France, for instance, for more than four centuries, not only by a wretchedness, but by every wretchedness, by every human wretchedness possible. And, then, we insist upon the fact, to study social deformities and infirmities, and point them out for cure, is not a task in which choice is permissible. The historian of morals and ideas has a mission no less austere than the historian of events. The latter has the surface of civilization, the struggles of crowned heads, the births of princes, the marriages of kings, assemblies, great public men and revolutions,—all the external part: the other historian has the interior, the basis,

the people that labours, suffers, and waits, the crushed woman, the child dying in agony, the dull warfare of man with man, obscene ferocities, prejudices, allowed iniquities, the subterranean counterstrokes of the law, the secret revolutions of minds, the indistinct shivering of multitudes, those who die of hunger, the bare-footed, the bare-armed, the disinherited, the orphans, the unhappy, the infamous, and all the ghosts that wander about in obscurity. He must go down with his heart full of charity and severity, at once as a brother and as a judge, into the impenetrable casemates in which crawl pell-mell those who bleed and those who wound, those who weep and those who cure, those who fast and those who devour, those that endure evil and those who commit it. Are the duties of the historians of hearts and souls inferior to those of the historians of external facts? can we believe that Alighieri has less to say than Machiavelli? is the lower part of civilization, because it is deeper and more gloomy, less important than the upper? Do we know the mountain thoroughly if we do not know the caverns?

We will notice, by the way, that from our previous remarks a marked separation, which does not exist in our mind, might be inferred between the two classes of historians. No one is a good historian of the patent, visible, glistening, and public life of a people, unless he is at the same time and to a certain extent the historian of their profound and hidden life, and no one is a good historian of the interior unless he can be, whenever it is required, historian of the exterior. The history of morals and ideas penetrates the history of events, and *vice versa*; they are two orders of different facts which answer to each other, are always linked together, and often engender one another. All the lineaments which providence traces on the surface of a nation have their gloomy but distinct parallels at the base, and all the convulsions of the interior produce up-heavings on the surface. As true history is a medley of everything, the real historian attends to everything. Man is not a circle with only one centre; he is an ellipse with two foci, facts being the one, and ideas the other; slang is nothing but a vestibule in which language, having some wicked action to commit, disguises itself. It puts on these masks of words and rags of metaphors. In this way it becomes horrible, and can scarce be recognized: is it really the French language, the great human tongue? it is ready to go on the stage and take up the cue of crime, and suited for all the parts in the repertory of evil. It no longer walks, but shambles; it limps upon the crutch of the Cour des Miracles, which may be

metamorphosed into a club : all the spectres, its dressers, have daubed its face, and it crawls along and stands erect with the double movement of the reptile. It is henceforth ready for any part, for it has been made to squint by the forger, has been verdigrised by the poisoner, blackened by the soot of the incendiary, and ruddled by the murderer.

When you listen at the door of society, on the side of honest men, you catch the dialogue of those outside. You distinguish questions and answers, and notice, without comprehending it, a hideous murmur, sounding almost like the human accent, but nearer to a yell than to speech. It is slang ; the words are deformed, wild, imprinted with a species of fantastic bestiality. You fancy that you hear hydras conversing. It is unintelligibility in darkness, it gnashes its teeth and talks in whispers, supplementing the gloom by enigmas. There is darkness in misfortune, and greater darkness still in crime, and these two darknesses amalgamated compose slang. There is obscurity in the atmosphere, obscurity in the deeds, obscurity in the voices. It is a horrifying, frog-like language, which goes, comes, hops, crawls, slavers, and moves monstrously in that common grey mist composed of crime, night, hunger, vice, falsehood, injustice, nudity, asphyxia, and winter, which is the high noon of the wretched.

Let us take compassion on the chastised, for, alas ! what are we ourselves ? who am I, who am speaking to you ? who are you, who are listening to me ? whence do we come ? and is it quite sure that we did nothing before we were born ? The earth is not without a resemblance to a gaol, and who knows whether man is not the ticket-of-leave of Divine justice ? If we look at life closely we find it so made, that there is punishment everywhere to be seen. Are you what is called a happy man ? well, you are sad every day, and each of them has its great grief or small anxiety. Yesterday, you trembled for a health which is dear to you, to-day you are frightened about your own, to-morrow it will be a monetary anxiety, and the day after the diatribe of a calumniator, and the day after that again the misfortune of some friend ; then the weather, then something broken or lost, or a pleasure for which your conscience and your backbone reproach you ; or, another time, the progress of public affairs, and we do not take into account heart-pangs. And so it goes on ; one cloud is dissipated, another forms, and there is hardly one day in one hundred of real joy and bright sunshine. And you are one of that small number who are happy : as for other men, the stagnation of night is

around them. Reflecting minds rarely use the expressions the happy and the unhappy, for in this world, which is evidently the vestibule of another, there are no happy beings. The true human division is into the luminous and the dark. To diminish the number of the dark, and augment that of the luminous, is the object, and that is why we cry, "Instruction and learning!" Learning to read is lighting the fire, and every syllable spelt is a spark. When we say light, however, we do not necessarily mean light; for men suffer in light, and excess of light burns. Flame is the enemy of the wings, and to burn without ceasing to fly is the prodigy of genius. When you know and when you love you will still suffer, for the day is born in tears, and the luminous weep, be it only for the sake of those in darkness.

CHAPTER II.

ROOTS OF SLANG.

SLANG is the language of those in darkness. Thought is affected in its gloomiest depths, and social philosophy is harassed in its most poignant undulations, in the presence of this enigmatical dialect, which is at once branded and in a state of revolt. There is in this a visible chastisement, and each syllable looks as if it were marked. The words of the common language appear in it, as if branded and hardened by the hangman's red-hot irons, and some of them seem to be still smoking; some phrases produce in you the effect of a robber's *fleur-de-lys* shoulder suddenly exposed, and ideas almost refuse to let themselves be represented by these convict substantives. The metaphors are at times so daring that you feel that they have worn fetters. Still, in spite of all this, and in consequence of all this, this strange patois has by right its compartment in that great impartial museum, in which there is room for the oxydized sou as well as the gold medal, and which is called toleration. Slang, whether people allow it or no, has its syntax and poetry, and is a language. If, by the deforming of certain vowels, we perceive that it has been chewed by Mandrin, we feel from certain metonyms that Villon spoke it. That exquisite and so celebrated line,

Mais où sont les neiges d'antan ?

is a verse of slang. Antan—*ante annum*, is a slang word of

Thunes, which signified the past year, and, by extension, formerly. Five-and-thirty years ago, on the departure of the great chain-gang, in 1827, there might be read in one of the dungeons of Bicêtre this maxim, engraved with a nail upon the wall by a king of Thunes condemned to the galleys, "les dabs d'antan trimaient siempre pour la pierre du Coësre," which means, "the kings of former days used always to go to be consecrated." In the thought of that king, the consecration was the galleys. The word *décarade*, which expresses the departure of a heavy coach at a gallop, is attributed to Villon, and is worthy of him. This word, which strikes fire, contains in a masterly onomatopœia the whole of Lafontaine's admirable line,

"Six forts chevaux tiraient un coche."

From a purely literary point of view, few studies would be more curious or fertile than that of slang. It is an entire language within a language, a sort of sickly grafting which has produced a vegetation, a parasite which has its roots in the old Gaulish trunk, and whose sinister foliage crawls up the whole of one side of the language. This is what might be called the first or common notion of slang, but to those who study the language as it should be studied, that is to say, as geologists study the earth, slang appears like a real alluvium. According as we dig more or less deeply, we find in slang, beneath the old popular French, Provençal, Spanish, Italian, Levantine, that language of the Mediterranean ports, English, and German, Romanic, in its three varieties of French, Italian and Roman, Latin, and finally, Basque and Celtic. It is a deep and strange formation, a subterranean edifice built up in common by all scoundrels. Each accursed race has deposited its stratum, each suffering has let its stone fall, each heart has given its pebble. A multitude of wicked, low, or irritated souls who passed through life, and have faded away in eternity, are found there almost entire, and to some extent still visible, in the shape of a monstrous word.

Do you want Spanish? the old Gothic slang swarms with it. Thus we have *boffette*, a box on the ears, which comes from *bofeton*; *vantane*, a window (afterwards vanterne), from *vantana*; *gat*, a cat, from *gato*; *acite*, oil, from *aceyte*. Do you want Italian? we have *spade*, a sword, which comes from *spada*, and *carvel*, a boat, which comes from *caravella*. From the English we have *bichot*, the *Bishop*, *raille*, a spy, from *rascal*, and *pilche*, a case, from *pilcher*, a scabbard. Of German origin are *calner*, the waiter, from *kelner*, *hers*, the master, from *herzog*, or duke.

In Latin we find *frangir*, to break, from *frangere*, *affurer*, to steal, from *fur*, and *cadène*, a chain, from *catena*. There is one word which is found in all continental language with a sort of mysterious power and authority, and that is the word *magnus*: Scotland makes of it, for instance, *mac*, and slang reduces it to *muk*, afterwards *Meg*, that is to say, the Deity. Do you wish for Basque? here is *gahisto*, the devil, which is derived from *gaiztoa*, bad, and *sorgabon*, good-night, which comes from *gabon*, good-evening. In Celtic we find *blavin*, a handkerchief, derived from *blavet*, running water; *menesse*, a woman (in a bad sense), from *meinc*, full of stones; *barant*, a stream, from *baranton*, a fountain; *goffeur*, a locksmith, from *goff*, a blacksmith; and *guedouze*, death, which comes from *guenn-du*, white and black. Lastly, do you wish for a bit of history? Slang calls crowns "the Maltese," in memory of the change which was current aboard the Maltese galleys.

In addition to the philological origins which we have indicated, slang has other and more natural roots, which issue, so to speak, directly from the human mind. In the first place, there is the direct creation of words, for it is the mystery of language to paint with words which have, we know not how or why, faces. This is the primitive foundation of every human language, or what might be called the granite. Slang swarms with words of this nature, immediate words created all of one piece, it is impossible to say when, or by whom, without etymologies, analogies, or derivatives,—solitary, barbarous, and at times hideous words, which have a singular power of expression, and are alive. The executioner, *le taule*; the forest, *le sabri*; fear or flight, *taf*; the footman, *le larbin*; the general, prefect, or minister, *pharos*; and the devil, *le rabouin*. Nothing can be stranger than these words, which form transparent masks: some of them, *le rabouin*, for instance, are at the same time grotesque and terrible, and produce the effect of a Cyclopean grimace. In the second place, there is metaphor, and it is the peculiarity of a language which wishes to say everything and conceal everything to abound in figures. Metaphor is an enigma in which the robber who is scheming a plot, or the prisoner arranging an escape, takes the refuge. No idiom is more metaphorical than slang; *dévisser le coco*, to twist the neck; *tortiller*, to eat; *être gerbé*, to be tried; *un rat*, a stealer of bread; *il lansquine*, it rains—an old striking figure, which bears to some extent its date with it, assimilates the long oblique lines of rain to the serried sloping pikes of the lansquenets, and contains in one word the popular adage, "It is raining halbersts." At times, in proportion as slang passes from the first to the second stage,

words pass from the savage and primitive state to the metaphorical sense. The devil ceases to be *le rabouin*, and becomes "the baker," or he who puts in the oven. This is wittier but not so grand, something like Racine after Corneille, or Euripides after Aeschylus. Some slang phrases which belong to both periods, and have at once a barbarous and a metaphorical character, resemble phantasmagorias: *Les sorgueurs vont sollicer les gails à la lune* (the prowlers are going to steal horses at night). This passes before the mind like a group of spectres, and we know not what we see. Thirdly, there is expediency: slang lives upon the language, uses it as it pleases, and when the necessity arises limits itself to denaturalizing it summarily and coarsely. At times, with the ordinary words thus deformed and complicated with pure slang, picturesque sentences are composed, in which the admission of the two previous elements, direct creation and metaphor, is visible—*le cab jaspine, je marronne que la roulette Pantin trime dans le sabri*, the dog barks, I suspect that the Paris diligence is passing through the wood; *le dab est sinve, la dabuge est merloussiere, la fée est bative*, the master is stupid, the mistress is cunning, and the daughter pretty. Most frequently, in order to throw out listeners, slang confines itself to adding indistinctly to all the words of the language, a species of ignoble tail, a termination in *aille, orgue, iergue, or uche*. Thus: *Vouziergue trouvaille bonorgue ce gigot-muche?* Do you find that leg of mutton good? This was a remark made by Cartouche to a jailer, in order to learn whether the sum offered him for an escape suited him. The termination in *mar* has been very recently added.

Slang, being the idiom of corruption, is itself quickly corrupted. Moreover, as it always tries to hide itself so soon as it feels that it is understood, it transforms itself. Exactly opposed to all other vegetables, every sunbeam kills what it falls on in it. Hence slang is being constantly decomposed and recomposed, and this is an obscure and rapid labour which never ceases, and it makes more way in ten years than language does in ten centuries. Thus *larton* (head) becomes *lartif, gail* (a horse) *gaye, fertanche* (straw) *fertille, momignard* (the child) *momaque, figues* (clothes) *frusques, chique* (the church) *l'egrueoir*, and *colabre* (the neck) *colas*. The devil is first *gahisto*, then *le rabouin*, and next the baker; a priest is the *ratichon*, and then the *sanglier*; a dagger is the *vingt-deux*, next a *surin*, and lastly a *lingre*; the police are *railles*, then *roussins*, then *marchands de lacet*, then *coqueurs*, and lastly *cognes*; the executioner is the *taule*, then *Charlot*, then the *atigeur*, and then the *becquillard*. In the seven-

teenth century to fight was to "take snuff," in the nineteenth it is "to have a quid in the throat," but twenty different names have passed away between these two extremes, and Cartouche would speak Hebrew to Lacenaire. All the words of this language are perpetually in flight, like the men who employ them. Still, from time to time, and owing to this very movement, the old slang reappears and becomes new again. It has its head-quarters where it holds its ground: the Temple preserved the slang of the seventeenth century, and Bicêtre, when it was a prison, that of Thunes. There the termination in *anche* of the old Thuners could be heard: *Boyanches-tu?* (do you drink?), *il croyanche* (he believes). But perpetual motion does not the less remain the law. If the philosopher succeeds in momentarily fixing, for the purpose of observation, this language, which is necessarily evaporating, he falls into sorrowful and useful meditations, and no study is more efficacious or more fertile and instructive. There is not a metaphor or an etymology of slang which does not contain a lesson.

Among these men *fighting* means *pretending*: they "fight" a disease, for cunning is their strength. With them the idea of man is not separated from the idea of a shadow. Night is called *la sorgue* and man *l'orgue*: man is a derivative of night. They have formed the habit of regarding society as an atmosphere which kills them, as a fatal force, and they talk of their liberty as they would talk of their health. A man arrested is a "patient;" a man sentenced is a "corpse." The most terrible thing for the prisoner within the four stone walls which form his sepulchre is a sort of freezing chastity, and hence he always calls the dungeon the *castus*. In this funereal place external life will appear under its most smiling aspect. The prisoner has irons on his feet, and you may perhaps fancy that he thinks how people walk with their feet: no, he thinks that they dance with them, hence, if he succeed in cutting through his fetters, his first idea is that he can now dance, and he calls the saw a *bastringue*. A name is a *centre*, a profound assimilation. The bandit has two heads,—the one which revolves his deeds and guides him through life, the other which he has on his shoulders on the day of his death: he calls the head which counsels him in crime, the *sorbonne*, and the one that expiates it the *tronche*. When a man has nothing but rags on his body and vices in his heart,—when he has reached that double moral and material degradation which the word *gueux* characterizes in its two significations, he is ripe for crime: he is like a well-sharpened blade: he has two edges,

his distress and his villany, and hence slang does not call him a “gueux” but a *réguisé*. What is the *bagne*? a furnace of damnation, a hell, and the convict calls himself a “faggot.” Lastly, what name do malefactors give to the prison? the “college.” A whole penitentiary system might issue from this word.

Would you like to know whence came most of the galley songs,—those choruses called in the special vocabularies the *lirlonfa*? Listen to this :

There was at the Chatelet of Paris a large, long cellar, which was eight feet below the level of the Seine. It had neither windows nor gratings, and the sole opening was the door: men could enter it, but air not. This cellar had for ceiling a stone arch, and for floor ten inches of mud: it had been paved, but, owing to the leakage of the water, the paving had rotted and fallen to pieces. Eight feet above the ground, a long massive joist ran from one end to the other of this vault: from this joist hung at regular distances chains, three feet long, and at the end of these chains were collars. In this cellar men condemned to the galleys were kept until the day of their departure for Toulon: they were thrust under this beam, where each had his fetters oscillating in the darkness and waiting for him. The chains, like pendant arms, and the collars, like open hands, seized these wretches by the neck: they were riveted and left there. As the chain was too short, they could not lie down: they remained motionless in this cellar, in this night, under this beam, almost hung, forced to make extraordinary efforts to reach their loaf or water-jug, with the vault above their heads and mud up to their knees, drawn and quartered by fatigue, giving way at the hips and knees, hanging on by their hands to the chain to rest themselves, only able to sleep standing, and awakened every moment by the choking of the collar;—some did not awake. To eat they were compelled to draw up their bread, which was thrown into the mud, with the heel all along the thigh to their hand. How long did they remain in this state? one month, two months, sometimes six months: one man remained a year. It was the antechamber of the galleys, and men were put in it for stealing a hare from the king. In this hellish sepulchre what did they? they died by inches, as people can do in a sepulchre, and sang, which they can do in a hell, for when there is no longer hope, song remains;—in the Maltese waters, when a galley was approaching, the singing was heard before the sound of the oars. The poor poacher Survincient, who passed through the cellar-prison of the Chatelet, said, “*rhymes*

sustained me." Poetry is useless: what is the good of rhymes? In this cellar nearly all the slang songs were born, and it is from the dungeon of the Great Chatelet of Paris that comes the melancholy chorus of Montgomery's galley: "*Timalou-misaine, timoulamison.*" Most of the songs are sad, some are gay, and one is tender:

" Icicaille est le théâtre
Du petit dardant."*

Do you what you will, you cannot destroy that eternal relic of man's heart, love.

In this world of dark deeds secrets are kept, for secrets are a thing belonging to all, and with these wretches secrecy is the unity which serves as the basis of union. To break secrecy is to tear from each member of this ferocious community something of himself. To denounce is called in the energetic language of slang "to eat the piece," as if the denouncer took a little of the substance of each, and supported himself on a piece of the flesh of each. What is receiving a buffet? the conventional metaphor answers, "It is seeing six-and-thirty candles." Here slang interferes and reads *camoufle* for candle; life in its ordinary language takes *camouflet* as a synonym for a box on the ears. Hence, by a sort of penetration from bottom to top, and by the aid of metaphor, that incalculable trajectory, slang ascends from the cellar to the academy, and Poulailleur saying, "I light my *camoufle*," makes Voltaire write, "Langleviel la Beaumelle deserves a hundred *camouflets*." Searching in slang is a discovery at every step, and the study and investigation of this strange idiom lead to the point of intersection of regular with accursed society. The robber has also his food for powder, or stealable matter in you, in me, in the first passer-by, the *pantré* (*pan*, everybody). Slang is the word converted into a convict. It produces a consternation to reflect that the thinking principle of man can be hurled down so deep that it can be dragged there and bound by the obscure tyranny of fatality, and be fastened to some unknown rivets on this precipice. Alas! will no one come to the help of the human soul in this darkness? Is it its destiny ever to await the mind, the liberator, the immense tamer of Pegasuses and hippocryphs, the dawn-coloured combatant, who descends from the azure sky between two wings, the radiant knight of the future? will it ever call in vain to its help the lance of the light of idealism? is it condemned always to look down into the gulf of evil and see closer and closer to

* The archer Cupid.

it beneath the hideous water the demoniac head, this slavering mouth, and this serpentine undulation of claws, swellings, and rings ? Must it remain there without a gleam of hope, left to the horror of this formidable and vaguely-smelt approach of the monster, shuddering, with dishevelled hair, wringing its arms and eternally chained to the rock of night, like a sombre white and naked Andromeda in the darkness ?

CHAPTER III.

LAUGHING SLANG AND CRYING SLANG.

As we see, the whole of slang, the slang of four hundred years ago, as well as that of the present day, is penetrated by that gloomy symbolic spirit which gives to every word at one moment a suffering accent, at another a menacing air : we see in it the old ferocious sorrow of those mumpers of the Cour des Miracles, who played at cards with packs of their own, some of which have been preserved for us. The eight of clubs, for instance, represented a tall man bearing eight enormous clover leaves, a sort of fantastic personification of the forest. At the foot of this tree could be seen a lighted fire, at which three hares were roasting a game-keeper on a spit, and behind, over another fire, a steaming cauldron from which a dog's head emerged. Nothing can be more lugubrious than these reprisals in painting upon a pack of cards, in the face of the pyres for smugglers and the cauldron for coiners. The various forms which thought assumed in the kingdom of slang, singing, jests, and menaces, all had this impotent and crushed character. All the songs of which a few melodies have come down to us were humble and lamentable enough to draw tears. The *pègre* calls himself the poor *pègre*, for he is always the hare that hides itself, the mouse that escapes, or the bird that flies away. He hardly protests, but restricts himself to sighing, and one of his groans has reached us : *Je n'entrave que le dail comment meck, le daron des orgues, peut atiger ses mómes et ses momignards, et les locher criblant sans être atigé lui-même.* (I do not understand how God, the father of men, can torture His children, and His grandchildren, and hear them cry, without being tortured Himself.) The wretch, whenever he has time to think, makes him-

self little before the law and paltry before society : he lies down on his stomach, supplicates, and implores pity, and we can see that he knows himself to be in the wrong.

Toward the middle of the last century a change took place : the person, songs, and choruses of the robbers assumed, so to speak, an insolent and jovial gesture. The *larifla* was substituted for the plaintive *maturé*, and we find in nearly all the songs of the galleys, the hulks, and the chain-gangs, a diabolical and enigmatical gaiety. We hear in them that shrill and leaping chorus which seems illumined by a phosphorescent gleam, and appears cast into the forest by a will-o'-the-wisp playing the fife.

Mirlababi surlababo
Mirliton ribonribette,
Surlababi mirlababo
Mirliton ribonribo.

They sang this while cutting a man's throat in a cellar or a thicket. It is a serious symptom that in the eighteenth century the old melancholy of three desponding classes is dissipated, and they begin to laugh ; they mock the grand "meg" and the grand "Dab," and Louis XV. being given they call the King of France the Marquis de Pantin. The wretches are nearly gay, and a sort of dancing light issues from them, as if their conscience no longer weighed them down. These lamentable tribes of darkness no longer possess the despairing audacity of deeds, but the careless audacity of the mind ; this is a sign that they are losing the feeling of their criminality, and finding some support, of which they are themselves ignorant, among the thinkers and dreamers. It is a sign that robbery and plunder are beginning to be filtered even into doctrines and sophisms, so as to lose a little of their ugliness, and give a good deal of it to the sophisms and the doctrine. Lastly, it is a sign of a prodigious and speedy eruption, unless some diversion arise. Let us halt here for a moment. Whom do we accuse ? is it the eighteenth century ? is it all philosophy ? certainly not. The work of the eighteenth century is healthy and good, and the Encyclopædist, with Diderot at their head, the physiocrats under Turgot, the philosophers led by Voltaire, and the Utopists commanded by Rousseau, are four sacred legions. The immense advance of humanity toward the light is due to them, and they are the four advanced guards of the human races, going toward the four cardinal points of progress—Diderot toward the beautiful, Turgot toward the useful, Voltaire toward truth, and Rousseau toward justice. But by the side of and below the philosophers were the sophists, a venom-

ous vegetation mingled with a healthy growth, a hemlock in the virgin forest. While the hangman was burning on the grand staircase of the Palace of Justice the grand liberating books of the age, writers now forgotten were publishing, with the royal privilege, strangely disorganizing books, which were eagerly read by the scoundrels. Some of these publications, patronized, strange to say, by a prince, will be found in the "Bibliothèque secrète." These facts, profound but unknown, were unnoticed on the surface, but at times the very obscurity of a fact constitutes its danger, and it is obscure because it is subterranean. Of all the writers, the one who perhaps dug the most unhealthy gallery at that day in the masses was Restif de la Bretonne.

This work, peculiar to all Europe, produced greater ravages in Germany than anywhere else. In Germany, during a certain period, which was summed up by Schiller in his famous drama of the Robbers, robbery and plunder were raised into a protest against property and labour, they appropriated certain elementary ideas, specious and false, apparently just, and in reality absurd, wrapped themselves up in these ideas, and to some extent disappeared in them, assumed an abstract name, and passed into a theoretical state, and in this way circulated among the laborious, suffering, and honest masses, without even the cognizance of the imprudent chemists who prepared the mixture, and the masses that accepted it. Whenever a fact of this nature is produced it is serious; suffering engenders passion; and while the prosperous blind themselves, or go to sleep, the hatred of the unfortunate classes kindles its torch at some sullen or ill-constituted mind, which is dreaming in a corner, and sets to work examining society. The examination of hatred is a terrible thing. Hence come, if the misfortune of the age desires it, those frightful commotions, formerly called Jacqueries, by the side of which purely political commotions are child's-play, and which are no longer the struggle of the oppressed with the oppressor, but the revolt of want against comfort. Everything is overthrown at such a time, and Jacqueries are the earthquakes of nations.

The French Revolution, that immense act of probity, cut short this peril, which was perhaps imminent in Europe toward the close of the eighteenth century. The French Revolution, which was nothing but the ideal armed with a sword, rose, and by the same sudden movement closed the door of evil and opened the door of good. It disengaged the question, promulgated the truth, expelled the miasma, ventilated the age, and crowned the people. We may say that it created man a second

time by giving him a second soul—justice. The nineteenth century inherits and profits by its work, and at the present day the social catastrophe which we just now indicated is simply impossible. He is a blind man who denounces it, a fool who fears it, for the Revolution is the vaccine of Jacquerie. Thanks to the Revolution, the social conditions are altered, and the feudal and monarchical diseases are no longer in our blood. There is no middle age left in our constitution, and we are no longer at the time when formidable internal commotions broke out, when the obscure course of a dull sound could be heard beneath the feet ; when the earth thrown out from the mole-holes appeared on the surface of civilization, when the soil cracked, when the roof of caverns opened, and monstrous heads suddenly emerged from the ground. The revolutionary sense is a moral sense, and the feeling of right being developed, develops the feeling of duty. The law of all is liberty, which ends where the liberty of another man begins, according to Robespierre's admirable definition. Since 1789 the whole people has been dilated in the sublimated individual ; there is no poor man who, having his right, has not his radiance ; the man, dying of hunger, feels within himself the honesty of France. The dignity of the citizen is an internal armour ; the man who is free is scrupulous, and the voter reigns. Hence comes incorruptibility ; hence comes the abortion of unhealthy covetousness, and hence eyes heroically lowered before temptation. The revolutionary healthiness is so great, that on a day of deliverance, a 14th of July, or a 10th of August, there is no populace, and the first cry of the enlightened and progressing crowds is, "Death to the robbers!" Progress is an honest man, and the ideal and the absolute do not steal pocket-handkerchiefs. By whom were the carriages containing the wealth of the Tuileries escorted in 1848 ? by the rag-pickers of the Faubourg St Antoine. Rags mounted guard over the treasure, and virtue rendered these mendicants splendid. In these carts, in barely-closed chests—some, indeed, still opened—there was, amid a hundred dazzling cases, that old crown of France, all made of diamonds, surmounted by the royal carbuncle and the Regent diamonds, worth thirty millions of francs ; they guarded this crown with bare feet. Hence Jacquerie is no longer possible, and I feel sorry for the clever men ; it is an old fear which has made its last effort, and could no longer be employed in politics. The great spring of the red spectre is now broken, and every bird is aware of the fact, the scarecrow no longer horrifies. The birds

treat the mannikin familiarly, and deposit their guano upon it, and the bourgeois laugh at it.

CHAPTER IV.

TWO DUTIES. WATCHING AND HOPING.

THIS being the case, is every social danger dissipated? certainly not. There is no Jacquerie, and society may be reassured on that side; the blood will not again rush to its head, but it must pay attention to the way in which it breathes. Apoplexy is no longer to be apprehended, but there is consumption, and social consumption is called wretchedness. People die as well when undermined as when struck by lightning. We shall never grow weary of repeating, that to think before all of the disinherited and sorrowful classes, to relieve, ventilate, enlighten, and love them, to magnificently enlarge their horizon, to lavish upon them education in every shape, to offer them the example of labour, and never that of indolence, to lessen the weight of the individual burden by increasing the notion of the universal object, to limit poverty without limiting wealth, to create vast fields of public and popular activity, to have, like Briareus, a hundred hands to stretch out on all sides to the crushed and the weak, to employ the collective power in opening workshops for every arm, schools for every aptitude, and laboratories for every intellect, to increase wages, diminish the toil, and balance the debit and credit, that is to say, proportion the enjoyment to the effort, and the satisfaction to the wants; in a word, to evolve from the social machine, on behalf of those who suffer and those who are ignorant, more light and more comfort,—is, and sympathetic souls must not forget it, the first of brotherly obligations, and, let egotistic hearts learn the fact, the first of political necessities. And all this, we are bound to add, is only a beginning, and the true question is this, labour cannot be law without being a right. But this is not the place to dwell on such a subject.

If nature is called providence, society ought to call itself foresight. Intellectual and moral growth is no less indispensable than natural amelioration; knowledge is a viaticum; thinking is a primary necessity, and truth is nourishment, like wheat. A reason fasting for knowledge and wisdom grows

thin, and we must nurse minds that do not eat quite as much as stomachs. If there be anything more poignant than a body pining away for want of bread, it is a mind that dies of hunger for enlightenment. The whole of our progress tends toward the solution, and some day people will be stupefied. As the human race ascends, the deepest strata will naturally emerge from the zone of distress, and the effacement of wretchedness will be effected by a simple elevation of the level. People would do wrong to doubt this blessed solution. The past, we grant, is very powerful at the present hour, and is beginning again. This rejuvenescence of a dead man is surprising, and he marches straight toward us. He appears a victor, and is a conqueror; he arrives with his legion, superstitions; with his sword, despotism; with his barrier, ignorance; and during some time past he has gained his battles. He advances, he threatens, he laughs, he is at our gates. But we have no reason to despair; let us sell the field on which Hannibal is encamped, for what can we, who believe, fear? A recoil of ideas is no more possible than it is for a river to flow up a hill. But those who desire no future ought to reflect; by saying no to progress they do not condemn the future, but themselves, and they give themselves a deadly disease by inoculating themselves with the past. There is only one way of refusing to-morrow, and that is, by dying; but we wish for no death,—that of the body, as late as possible, and that of the soul, never. Yes, the sphynx will speak, and the problem will be solved; the people sketched by the eighteenth century will be finished by the nineteenth. He is an idiot who doubts it. The future, the speedy bursting into flower of universal welfare, is a divinely fatal phenomenon. Immense and combined impulsions pushing together govern human facts, and lead them all within a given time to the logical state, that is to say, to equilibrium, or in other words, to equity. A force composed of earth and heaven results from humanity and governs it; this force is a performer of miracles, and marvellous denouements are as easy to it as extraordinary incidents. Aided by science, which comes from man, and the event, which comes from another source, it is but little frightened by those contradictions in the setting of problems which seem to the vulgar herd impossibilities. It is no less skilful in producing a solution from the approximation of ideas than in producing instruction from the approximation of facts, and we may expect anything and everything from the mysterious power of progress, which, on fine days, confronts the east and the west in a sepulchre, and makes the Imams hold conference with Bonaparte in the interior of the great Pyramid. In the mean while, there is no halt, no

hesitation, no check, in the grand forward march of minds. Social philosophy is essentially the source of peace ; it has for its object, and must have as result, the dissolution of passions by the study of antagonisms. It examines, scrutinizes, and analyzes, and then it recomposes ; and it proceeds by the reducing process, by removing hatred from everything.

It has more than once occurred, that a society has been sunk by the wind which is let loose on men ; history is full of the shipwrecks of peoples and empires ; one day, that stranger, the hurricane, passes, and carries away manners, laws, and religions. The civilizations of India, Chaldæa, Persia, Assyria, and Egypt have disappeared in turn ; why ? we are ignorant. What are the causes of these disasters ? we do not know. Could those societies have been saved ? was it any fault of their own ? did they obstinately adhere to some fatal vice which destroyed them ? What amount of suicide is there in these terrible deaths of a nation and a race ? These are unanswerable questions, for darkness covers the condemned civilizations. They have been under water, since they sank, and we have no more to say, and it is with a species of terror that we see in the back-ground of that sea which is called the past, and behind those gloomy waves, centuries, those immense vessels, Babylon, Nineveh, Tarsus, Thebes, and Rome, sunk by the terrific blast which blows from all the mouths of the darkness. But there was darkness then, and we have light ; and if we are ignorant of the diseases of ancient civilizations, we know the infirmities of our own, and we contemplate its beauties and lay bare its deformities. Wherever it is wounded we probe it, and at once the suffering is decided, and the study of the cause leads to the discovery of the remedy. Our civilization, the work of twenty centuries, is at once the monster and the prodigy, and is worth saving ; it will be saved. To retain it is much, and to enlighten it is also something. All the labours of modern social philosophy ought to converge to this object, and the thinker of the present day has a grand duty to apply the stethoscope to civilization. We repeat it, this auscultation is encouraging ; and we intend to finish these few pages, which are an austere interlude in a mournful drama, by laying a stress on this encouragement. Beneath the social mortality the human imperishableness is felt, and the globe does not die, because here and there are wounds in the shape of craters, and ringworms in the shape of solfatari, and a volcano which breaks out and scatters its fires around. The diseases of the people do not kill the man.

And yet some of those who follow the social clinics shake

their heads at times, and the strongest, the most tender, and the most logical, have their hours of despondency. Will the future arrive? it seems as if we may almost ask this question on seeing so much terrible shadow. There is a sombre, face-to-face meeting of the egotists and the wretched. In the egotist we trace prejudices, the cloudiness of a caste education, appetite growing with intoxication, and prosperity that stuns, a fear of suffering which in some goes so far as an aversion from the sufferers, an implacable satisfaction, and the feeling of self so swollen that it closes the soul. In the wretched we find covetousness, envy, the hatred of seeing others successful, the profound bounds of the human wild beast at satisfaction, and hearts full of mist, sorrow, want, fatality, and impure and simple ignorance. Must we still raise our eyes to heaven? is the luminous point which we notice there one of those which die out? The ideal is frightful to look on thus lost in the depths, small, isolated, imperceptible, and brilliant, but surrounded by all those great black menaces monstrously collected around it: for all that, though, it is in no more danger than a star in the yawning throat of the clouds.

CHAPTER V.

B R I G H T L I G H T.

THE reader has of course understood that Eponine, on recognizing through the railings the inhabitant of the house in the Rue Plumet, to which Magnon sent her, began by keeping the bandits aloof from the house, then led Marius to it, and that after several days of ecstasy before the railings, Marius, impelled by that force which attracts iron to the loadstone, and the lover toward the stones of the house in which she whom he loves resides, had eventually entered Cosette's garden, as Romeo did Juliet's. This had even been an easier task for him than for Romeo, for Romeo was obliged to escalade a wall, while Marius had merely to move one of the bars of the decrepit railing loose in its rusty setting, after the fashion of the teeth of old people. As Marius was thin he easily passed. As there never was anybody in the street, and as Marius never entered the garden save at night, he ran no risk of being seen. From that blessed and holy hour when a kiss affianced these

two souls, Marius went to the garden every night. If, at this moment of her life, Cosette had fallen in love with an unscrupulous libertine, she would have been lost, for there are generous natures that surrender themselves, and Cosette was one of them. One of the magnanimities of a woman is to yield, and love, at that elevation where it is absolute, is complicated by a certain celestial blindness of modesty. But what dangers you incur, ye noble souls ! you often give the heart and we take the body : your heart is left you, and you look at it in the darkness with a shudder. Love has no middle term : it either saves or destroys, and this dilemma is the whole of human destiny. No fatality offers this dilemma of ruin or salvation more inexorably than does love, for love is life, if it be not death : it is a cradle, but also a coffin. The same feeling says yes and no in the human heart, and of all the things which God has made, the human heart is the one which evolves the most light, and, alas ! the most darkness. God willed it that the love which Cosette came across was one of those loves which save. So long as the month of May of that year, 1832, lasted, there were every night in this poor untrimmed garden, and under this thicket, which daily became more fragrant and more thick, two beings composed of all the chastities and all the innocences, overflowing with all the felicities of heaven, nearer to the archangels than to man, pure, honest, intoxicated, and radiant, and who shone for each other in the darkness. It seemed to Cosette as if Marius had a crown, and to Marius as if Cosette had a glory. They touched each other, they looked at each other, they took each other by the hand, they drew close to each other ; but there was a distance which they never crossed. Not that they respected it, but they were ignorant of it. Marius felt a barrier in Cosette's purity, and Cosette felt a support in the loyalty of Marius. The first kiss had also been the last : since then Marius had never gone beyond touching Cosette's hand or neckhandkerchief or a curl with his lips. Cosette was to him a perfume, and not a woman, and he inhaled her. She refused nothing, and he asked for nothing : Cosette was happy and Marius satisfied. They lived in that ravishing state which might be called the bedazzlement of a soul by a soul ; it was the ineffable first embrace of two virginities in the ideal, two swans meeting on the Jungfrau. At this hour of love, the hour when voluptuousness is absolutely silenced by the omnipotence of ecstasy, Marius, the pure and seraphic Marius, would have sooner been able to go home with a street-walker than raise Cosette's gown as high as her ankle. Once in the moonlight, Cosette stooped to pick up something on the

ground, and her dress opened and displayed her neck. Marius turned his eyes away.

What passed between these two lovers? Nothing, they adored each other. At night, when they were there, this garden seemed a living and sacred spot. All the flowers opened around them and sent them their incense; and they opened their souls and spread them over the flowers. The wanton and vigorous vegetation quivered, full of sap and intoxication, around these two innocents, and they uttered words of love at which the trees shivered. What were these words? Nothings, and nothing more, but they were sufficient to trouble and affect all this nature. It is a magic power which it would be difficult to understand, were we to read in a book this conversation made to be carried away and dissipated like smoke beneath the leaves by the wind. Take away from these whispers of two lovers the melody which issues from the soul, and accompanies them like a lyre, and what is left is only a shadow, and you say, "What! is it only that?" Well, yes, child's-play, repetitions, laughs at nothing, absurdities, foolishness, all that is the most sublime and profound in the world! the only things which are worth the trouble of being said and being listened to. The man who has never heard, the man who has never uttered, these absurdities and poor things is an imbecile and a wicked man. Said Cosette to Marius,—

"Do you know that my name is Euphrasie?"

"Euphrasie? no, it is Cosette."

"Oh! Cosette is an ugly name, which was given me when I was little, but my real name is Euphrasie. Don't you like that name?"

"Yes, but Cosette is not ugly."

"Do you like it better than Euphrasie?"

"Well—yes."

"In that case, I like it better too. That is true, Cosette is pretty. Call me Cosette."

Another time she looked at him intently, and exclaimed,—

"You are handsome, sir, you are good-looking, you have wit, you are not at all stupid, you are much more learned than I, but I challenge you with, 'I love you.'"

And Marius fancied that he heard a strophe sung by a star. Or else she gave him a little tap, when he coughed, and said,—

"Do not cough, sir, I do not allow anybody to cough in my house without permission. It is very wrong to cough and frighten me. I wish you to be in good health, because if you were not I should be very unhappy, and what would you have me do?"

And this was simply divine.

Once Marius said to Cosette,—

“ Just fancy, I supposed for a while that your name was Ursula.”

This made them laugh the whole evening. In the middle of another conversation he happened to exclaim,—

“ Oh! one day at the Luxembourg I felt disposed to settle an invalid!”

But he stopped short, and did not complete the sentence, for he would have been obliged to allude to Cosette’s garter, and that was impossible. There was a strange feeling connected with the flesh, before which this immense innocent love recoiled with a sort of holy terror. Marius imagined life with Cosette like this, without anything else; to come every evening to the Rue Plumet, remove the old complacent bar of the President’s railings, sit down elbow to elbow on this bench, look through the trees at the scintillation of the commencing night, bring the fold in his trouser-knee into cohabitation with Cosette’s ample skirts, to caress her thumb-nail, and to inhale the same flower in turn for ever and indefinitely. During this time the clouds passed over their heads, and each time the wind blows it carries off more of a man’s thoughts than of clouds from the sky. We cannot affirm that this chaste, almost stern love was absolutely without gallantry. “ Paying compliments” to her whom we love is the first way of giving caresses and an attempted semi-boldness. A compliment is something like a kiss through a veil, and pleasure puts its sweet point upon it, while concealing itself. The cajoleries of Marius, all saturated with chimera, were, so to speak, of an azure blue. The birds when they fly in the direction of the angels must hear words of the same nature, still life, humanity, and the whole amount of positivism of which Marius was capable were mingled with it. It was what is said in the grotto, as a prelude to what will be said in the alcove; a lyrical effusion, the strophe and the sonnet commingled, the gentle hyperboles of cooing, all the refinements of adoration arranged in a posy, and exhaling a subtle and celestial perfume, an ineffable prattling of heart to heart.

“ Oh!” Marius muttered, “ how lovely you are! I dare not look at you, and that is the reason why I contemplate you. You are a grace, and I know not what is the matter with me. The hem of your dress, where the end of your slipper passes through, upsets me. And then, what an enchanting light when your thoughts become visible, for your reason astonishes me, and you appear to me for instants to be a dream. Speak, I am listening to you, and admiring you. Oh, Cosette, how strange and

charming it is, I am really mad. You are adorable, and I study your feet in the microscope and your soul with the telescope."

And Cosette made answer,—

"And I love you a little more through all the time which has passed since this morning."

Questions and answers went on as they could in this dialogue, which always agreed in the subject of love, like the elder-pith balls on the nail. Cosette's entire person was simplicity, ingenuousness, whiteness, candour, and radiance, and it might have been said of her that she was transparent. She produced on every one who saw her a sensation of April and day-break, and she had dew in her eyes. Cosette was a condensation of the light of dawn in a woman's form. It was quite simple that Marius, as he adored, should admire. But the truth is, that this little boarding-school Miss, just freshly turned out of a convent, talked with exquisite penetration, and made at times all sorts of true and delicate remarks. Her chattering was conversation, and she was never mistaken about anything, and conversed correctly. Woman feels and speaks with the infallibility which is the tender instinct of the heart. No one knows like a woman how to say things which are at once gentle and deep. Gentleness and depth, in those things the whole of woman is contained, and it is heaven. And in this perfect felicity tears welled in their eyes at every moment. A lady-bird crushed, a feather that fell from a nest, a branch of hawthorn broken, moved their pity, and then ecstasy, gently drowned by melancholy, seemed to ask for nothing better than to weep. The most sovereign symptom of love is a tenderness which becomes at times almost insupportable. And by the side of all this—for contradictions are the lightning sport of love—they were fond of laughing with a ravishing liberty, and so familiarly that, at times, they almost seemed like two lads. Still, even without these two hearts intoxicated with chastity being conscious of it, unforgettable nature is ever there, ever there with its brutal and sublime object, and whatever the innocence of souls may be, they feel in the most chaste *tête-à-tête* the mysterious and adorable distinction which separates a couple of lovers from a couple of friends.

They idolized each other. The permanent and the immutable exist; a couple love, they laugh, they make little pouts with their lips, they intertwine their fingers, and that does not prevent eternity. Two lovers conceal themselves in a garden in the twilight, in the invisible, with the birds and the roses, they fascinate each other in the darkness with their souls which

they place in their eyes, they mutter, they whisper, and during this period immense constellations of planets fill infinity.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BEGINNING OF THE SHADOW.

COSSETTE and Marius lived vaguely in the intoxication of their madness, and they did not notice the cholera which was decimating Paris in that very month. They had made as many confessions to each other as they could, but they had not extended very far beyond their names. Marius had told Cosette that he was an orphan, Pontmercy by name, a barrister by profession, and gaining a livelihood by writing things for publishers; his father was a colonel, a hero, and he, Marius, had quarrelled with his grandfather who was very rich. He also incidentally remarked that he was a baron, but this did not produce much effect on Cosette. Marius a baron? she did not understand it, and did not know what the word meant, and Marius was Marius to her. For her part, she confided to him that she had been educated at the convent of the Little Picpus, that her mother was dead, like his, that her father's name was Fauchelevent, that he was very good and gave a great deal to the poor, but was himself poor, and deprived himself of everything, while depriving her of nothing. Strange to say, in the species of symphony which Marius had lived in since he found Cosette again, the past, even the most recent, had become so confused and distant to him that what Cosette told him completely satisfied him. He did not even dream of talking to her about the nocturnal adventure in the garret, the Thénardiers, the burning, the strange attitude and singular flight of her father. Marius momentarily forgot all this; he did not know at night what he had done in the morning, where he had breakfasted or who had spoken to him; he had a song in his ears which rendered him deaf to every other thought, and he only existed during the hours when he saw Cosette. As he was in heaven at that time, it was perfectly simple that he should forget the earth. Both of them bore languidly the undefinable weight of immaterial joys; that is the way in which those somnambulists called lovers live.

Alas ! who is there that has not experienced these things ? why does an hour arrive when we emerge from this azure, and why does life go on afterwards ? Love almost takes the place of thought, and is an ardent forgetfulness of the rest. It is absurd to ask passion for logic, for there is no more an absolute logical concatenation in the human heart than there is a perfect geometric figure in the celestial mechanism. For Cosette and Marius nothing more existed than Marius and Cosette ; the whole universe around them had fallen into a gulf, and they lived in a golden moment, with nothing before them, nothing behind them. Marius scarce remembered that Cosette had a father, and in his brain there was the effacement of bedazzlement. Of what did these lovers talk ? as we have seen, of flowers, swallows, the setting sun, the rising moon, and all the importantthings. They had told themselves everything except everything, for the everything of lovers is nothing. Of what use would it be to talk of her father, the realities, that den, those bandits, that adventure ? and was it quite certain that the nightmare had existed ? They were two, they adored each other, and there was only that, there was nothing else. It is probable that this evanishment of death behind us is inherent to the arrival in Paradise. Have we seen demons ? are there any ? have we trembled ? have we suffered ? we no longer know, and there is a roseate cloud over it all.

Hence these two beings lived in this way, very high up, and with all the unverisimilitude which there is in nature ; neither at the nadir nor at the zenith, but between man and the seraphs, above the mud and below the æther, in the clouds ; they were not so much flesh and bone as soul and ecstasy from head to foot, already too sublimated to walk on earth, and still too loaded with humanity to disappear in æther, and held in suspense like atoms which are waiting to be precipitated ; apparently beyond the pale of destiny, and ignorant of that rut, yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow ; amazed, transported, and floating at moments with a lightness sufficient for a flight in the infinitude, and almost ready for the eternal departure. They slept awake in this sweet lulling ; oh splendid lethargy of the real overpowered by the ideal ! At times Cosette was so beautiful that Marius closed his eyes before her. The best way of gazing at the soul is with closed eyes. Marius and Cosette did not ask themselves to what this would lead them, and looked at each other as if they had already arrived. It is a strange claim on the part of men to wish that love should lead them somewhere. Jean Valjean suspected nothing, for Cosette, not quite such a dreamer as Marius,

was gay, and that sufficed to render Jean Valjean happy. Cosette's thoughts, her tender preoccupations, and the image of Marius which filled her soul, removed none of the incomparable purity of her splendid, chaste, and smiling forehead. She was at the age when the virgin wears her love as the angel wears its lily. Jean Valjean was, therefore, happy ; and, besides, when two lovers understand each other, things always go well, and any third party who might trouble their love is kept in a perfect state of blindness by a small number of precautions, which are always the same with all lovers. Hence Cosette never made any objections ; if he wished to take a walk, very good, my little papa, and if he stayed at home, very good, and if he wished to spend the evening with Cosette, she was enchanted. As he always went to his out-house at ten o'clock at night, on those occasions Marius did not reach the garden till after that hour, when he heard from the street Cosette opening the door. We need hardly say that Marius was never visible by day, and Jean Valjean did not even remember that Marius existed. One morning, however, he happened to say to Cosette, "Why, the back of your dress is all white!" On the previous evening Marius in a transport had pressed Cosette against the wall. Old Toussaint, who went to bed at an early hour, only thought of sleeping so soon as her work was finished, and was ignorant of everything like Jean Valjean.

Marius never set foot in the house when he was with Cosette ; they concealed themselves in a niche near the steps, so as not to be seen or heard from the street, and sat there, often contenting themselves with the sole conversation of pressing hands twenty times a minute, and gazing at the branches of the trees. At such moments, had a thunderbolt fallen within thirty feet of them, they would not have noticed it, so profoundly was the reverie of the one absorbed and plunged in the reverie of the other. It was a limpid purity, and the houses were all white, and nearly all alike. This genus of love is a collection of lily leaves and dove's feathers. The whole garden was between them and the street, and each time that Marius came in and out he carefully restored the bar of the railings, so that no disarrangement was visible. He went away generally at midnight, and went back to Courfeyrac's lodgings. Courfeyrac said to Bahorel,—

"Can you believe it? Marius returns home at present at one in the morning."

Bahorel answered,—

"What would you have? There is always a bombshell inside a seminarist."

At times Courfeyrac crossed his arms, assumed a stern air, and said to Marius,—

"Young man, you are becoming irregular in your habits."

Courfeyrac, who was a practical man, was not pleased with this reflection of an invisible paradise cast on Marius; he was but little accustomed to unpublished passions, hence he grew impatient, and at times summoned Marius to return to reality. One morning he cast this admonition to him,—

"My dear fellow, you produce on me the effect at present of being a denizen of the moon, in the kingdom of dreams, the province of illusion, whose chief city is soap-bubble. Come, don't play the prude,—what is her name?"

But nothing could make Marius speak, and his nails could have been dragged from him more easily than one of the three sacred syllables of which the ineffable name *Cosette* was composed. True love is luminous as the dawn, and silent as the tomb. Still Courfeyrac found this change in Marius, that his taciturnity was radiant. During the sweet month of May, Marius and Cosette knew this immense happiness—to quarrel and become reconciled, to talk for a long time, and with the most minute details, about people who did not interest them the least in the world,—a further proof that in that ravishing opera which is called love, the libretto is nothing. For Marius it was heaven to listen to Cosette talking of dress; for Cosette to listen to Marius talking politics, to listen, knee against knee, to the vehicles passing along the Rue de Babylone, to look at the same planet in space, or the same worm glistening in the grass, to be silent together, a greater pleasure still than talking, &c. &c. &c.

Still various complications were approaching. One evening Marius was going to the rendezvous along the Boulevard des Invalides; he was walking as usual with his head down, and as he was turning the corner of the Rue Plumet, he heard some one say close to him,—

"Good evening, Monsieur Marius."

He raised his head, and recognized Eponine. This produced a singular effect: he had not once thought of this girl since the day when she led him to the Rue Plumet; he had not seen her again, and she had entirely left his mind. He had only motives to be grateful to her, he owed her his present happiness, and yet it annoyed him to meet her. It is an error to believe that passion, when it is happy and pure, leads a man to a state of per-

fection ; it leads him simply, as we have shown, to a state of forgetfulness. In this situation, man forgets to be wicked, but he also forgets to be good, and gratitude, duty, and essential and material recollections, fade away. At any other time Marius would have been very different to Eponine, but, absorbed by Cosette, he had not very clearly comprehended that this Eponine was Eponine Thénardier, and that she bore a name written in his father's will—that name to which he would have so ardently devoted himself a few months previously. We show Marius as he was, and his father himself slightly disappeared in his mind beneath the splendour of his love. Hence he replied with some embarrassment,—

“ Ah, is it you, Eponine ? ”

“ Why do you treat me so coldly ? Have I done you any injury ? ”

“ No,” he answered.

Certainly he had no fault to find with her ; on the contrary. Still he felt that he could not but say “ you ” to Eponine, now that he said “ thou ” to Cosette. As he remained silent, she exclaimed,—

“ Tell me— ”

Then she stopped, and it seemed as if words failed this creature, who was formerly so impudent and bold. She tried to smile and could not, so continued,—

“ Well ? ”

Then she was silent again, and looked down on the ground.

“ Good night, Monsieur Marius,” she suddenly said, and went away.

CHAPTER VII.

A CAB RUNS IN ENGLISH AND BARKS IN SLANG.

THE next day—it was June 3rd, 1832, a date to which we draw attention owing to the grave events which were at that moment hanging over the horizon of Paris in the state of lightning-charged clouds—Marius at night-fall was following the same road as on the previous evening, with the same ravishing thoughts in his heart, when he saw between the boulevard trees Eponine coming toward him. Two days running,—that was too much ; so he sharply turned back, changed his course, and

went to the Rue Plumet by the Rue Monsieur. This caused Eponine to follow him as far as the Rue Plumet, a thing she had never done before; hitherto, she had contented herself with watching him as he passed along the boulevard, without attempting to meet him: last evening was the first time that she ventured to address him. Eponine followed him, then, without his suspecting it: she saw him move the railing-bar aside and step into the garden.

"Hilloh!" she said, "he enters the house."

She went up to the railing, felt the bars in turn, and easily distinguished the one which Marius had removed; and she muttered in a low voice, and with a lugubrious accent—"None of that, Lisette!"

She sat down on the stone work of the railing, close to the bar, as if she were guarding it. It was exactly at the spot where the railings joined the next wall, and there was there a dark corner, in which Eponine entirely disappeared. She remained thus for more than an hour without stirring or breathing, absorbed in thought. About ten o'clock at night, one of the two or three passers along the Rue Plumet, an old belated citizen, who was hurrying along the deserted and ill-famed street, while passing the railing, heard a dull menacing voice saying,—

"I am not surprised now that he comes every evening."

The passer-by looked around him, saw nobody, did not dare to peer into this dark corner, and felt horribly alarmed. He redoubled his speed, and was quite right in doing so, for in a few minutes six men, who were walking separately, and at some distance from each other, under the walls, and who might have been taken for a drunken patrol, entered the Rue Plumet: the first who reached the railings stopped and waited for the rest, and a second after, all six were together, and began talking in whispered slang,—

"It's here," said one of them.

"Is there a dog in the garden?" another asked.

"I don't know. In any case I have brought a ball which we will make it swallow."

"Have you got some mastic to break a pane?"

"Yes."

"The railings are old," remarked the fifth man, who seemed to have the voice of a ventriloquist.

"All the better," said the second speaker, "it will make no noise when sawn, and won't be so hard to cut through."

The sixth, who had not yet opened his mouth, began examining the railings as Eponine had done an hour ago, and

thus reached the bar which Marius had unfastened. Just as he was about to seize this bar, a hand suddenly emerging from the darkness, clutched his arm ; he felt himself roughly thrust back, and a hoarse voice whispered to him, "There's a cab (a dog)." At the same time he saw a pale girl standing in front of him. The man had that emotion which is always produced by things unexpected ; his hair stood hideously on end. Nothing is more formidable to look at than startled wild beasts. He fell back and stammered,—

"Who is this she-devil ? "

"Your daughter."

It was, in truth, Eponine speaking to Thénardier. Upon her apparition, the other five men, that is to say, Claqueusous, Gueulemer, Babet, Montparnasse, and Brujon, approached noiselessly, without hurry or saying a word, but with the sinister slowness peculiar to these men of the night. Some hideous tools could be distinguished in their hands, and Gueulemer held a pair of those short pincers which burglars call *fauchons*.

"Well, what are you doing here ? what do you want ? are you mad ?" Thénardier exclaimed, as far as is possible to exclaim in a whisper. "Have you come to prevent us from working ?"

Eponine burst into a laugh and leapt on his neck. "I am here, my dear little pappy, because I am here ; are not people allowed to sit down in copings at present ? it is you who oughtn't to be here ; and what have you come to do, since it is a biscuit ? I told Magnon so, and there is nothing to be done here. But embrace me, my dear pappy, it is such a time since I saw you. You are out, then !"

Thénardier tried to free himself from Eponine's arms, and growled,—

"There, there, you have embraced me. Yes, I am out, and not in. Now be off."

But Eponine did not loose her hold, and redoubled her caresses.

"My dear pappy, how ever did you manage ? You must have been very clever to get out of that scrape, so tell me all about it. And where is mamma ? give me some news of her."

Thénardier answered,—

"She's all right. I don't know, leave me and be off, I tell you."

"I do not exactly want to go off," Eponine said with the pout of a spoiled child ; "you send me away, though I haven't

seen you now for four months, and I have scarce had time to embrace you."

And she caught her father again round the neck.

"Oh, come, this is a bore," said Babet.

"Make haste," said Gueulemer, "the police may pass."

The ventriloquial voice hummed,—

"Nous n'sommes pas le jour de l'an,
A bécoter papa, maman."

Eponine turned to the five bandits:

"Why, that's Monsieur Brujon. Good evening, Monsieur Babet; good evening, Monsieur Claqueusous. What, don't you know me, Monsieur Gueulemer? How are you, Montparnasse?"

"Yes, they know you," said Thénardier; "but now good night, and be off; leave us alone."

"It is the hour of the foxes, and not of the chickens," said Montparnasse.

"Don't you see that we have work here?" Babet added.

Eponine took Montparnasse by the hand. "Mind," he said, "you will cut yourself, for I have an open knife."

"My dear Montparnasse," Eponine replied very gently, "confidence ought to be placed in people, and I am my father's daughter, perhaps. Monsieur Babet, Monsieur Gueulemer, I was ordered to examine into this affair."

It is remarkable that Eponine did not speak slang; ever since she had known Marius that frightful language had become impossible to her. She pressed Gueulemer's great coarse fingers in her little bony hand, which was as weak as that of a skeleton, and continued,—"You know very well that I am no fool, and people generally believe me. I have done you a service now and then; well, I have made inquiries, and you would run a needless risk. I swear to you that there is nothing to be done in this house."

"There are lone women," said Gueulemer.

"No, they have moved away."

"Well, the candles haven't," Babet remarked, and he pointed over the trees to a light which was moving about the garret; it was Toussaint who was up so late in order to hang up some linen to dry. Eponine made a final effort.

"Well," she said, "they are very poor people, and there isn't a penny piece in the house."

"Go to the devil," cried Thénardier; "when we have turned the house topsy-turvy, and placed the cellar at top

and the attics at the bottom, we will tell you what there is inside, and whether they are francs, sous, or liards."

And he thrust her away that he might pass.

"My kind M. Montparnasse," Eponine said, "I ask you, who are a good fellow, not to go in."

"Take care, you'll cut yourself," Montparnasse replied.

Thénardier remarked, with that decisive accent of his,—

"Decamp, fairy, and leave men to do their business."

Eponine let go Montparnasse's hand, which she had seized again, and said,—

"So you intend to enter this house?"

"A little," the ventriloquist said with a grin.

She leant against the railings, faced these six men armed to the teeth, to whom night gave demoniac faces, and said in a firm, low voice,—

"Well, I will not let you!"

They stopped in stupefaction, but the ventriloquist completed his laugh. She continued,—

"Friends, listen to me, for it's now my turn to speak. If you enter this garden or touch this railing I will scream, knock at doors, wake people; I will have you all six seized, and call the police."

"She is capable of doing it," Thénardier whispered to the ventriloquist and Brujon.

She shook her head, and added,—

"Beginning with my father."

Thénardier approached her.

"Not so close, my good man," she said.

He fell back, growling between his teeth "Why, what is the matter?" and added, "the b—."

She burst into a terrible laugh.

"As you please, but you shall not enter; but I am not the daughter of a dog, since I am the whelp of a wolf. You are six, but what do I care for that? You are men and I am a woman. You won't frighten me, I can tell you, and you shall not enter this house because it does not please me. If you come nearer I bark, and I told you there was a dog, and I am it. I do not care a farthing for you, so go your way, for you annoy me! Go where you like, but don't come here, for I forbid it. Come on as you like, you with your knives, and I have my feet."

She advanced a step toward the bandits and said, with the same frightful laugh,—

"Confound it! I'm not frightened. This summer I shall

be hungry, and this winter I shall be cold. What asses these men must be to think they can frighten a girl! Afraid of what? You have got dolls of mistresses who crawl under the bed when you talk big, but I am afraid of nothing!"

She fixed her eye on Thénardier, and said,—“ Not even of you, father.”

Then she continued, as she turned her spectral, blood-shot eyeballs on each of the bandits in turn,—

“ What do I care whether I am picked up to-morrow on the pavement of the Rue Plumet stabbed by my father, or am found within a year in the nets of St Cloud or on Swan’s island, among old rotting corks and drowned dogs ! ”

She was compelled to break off, for she was attacked by a dry cough, and her breath came from her weak, narrow chest like the death-rattle.

She continued,—

“ I have only to cry out and people will come, patatras. You are six, but I am all Paris.”

Thénardier moved a step toward her.

“ Don’t come near me,” she cried.

He stopped, and said gently,—

“ Well, no, I will not approach you, but do not talk so loud. Do you wish to prevent us from working, my daughter ? And yet we must earn a livelihood. Do you no longer feel any affection for your father ? ”

“ You bore me,” said Eponine.

“ Still we must live, we must eat—”

“ Rot of hunger.”

This said, she sat down on the coping of the railings and sang,—

Mon bras si dodu,
Ma jambe bien faite,
Et le temps perdu.

She had her elbow on her knee, and her chin in her hand, and balanced her foot with a careless air. Her ragged gown displayed her thin shoulder-blades, and the neighbouring lamp lit up her profile and attitude. Nothing more resolute or more surprising could well be imagined. The six burglars, amazed and savage at being held in check by a girl, went under the shadow of the lamp and held council, with humiliated and furious shrugs of their shoulders. She, however, looked at them with a peaceful and stern air.

“ There’s something the matter with her,” said Babet, “ some reason for it. Can she be in love with the dog ? and, yet, it’s a pity to miss the affair. There are two women who live

alone, an old cove who lives in a yard, and very decent curtains up to the windows. The old swell must be a Jew, and I consider the affair a good one."

"Well, do you fellows go in," Montparnasse exclaimed, "and do the trick. I will remain here with the girl, and if she stirs—"

He let the knife which he held in his hand glisten in the lamp-light. Thénardier did not say a word, and seemed ready for anything they pleased. Brujon, who was a bit of an oracle, and who, as we know, "put up the job," had not yet spoken, and seemed thoughtful. He was supposed to recoil at nothing, and it was notorious that he had plundered a police-office through sheer bravado. Moreover, he wrote verses and songs, which gave him a great authority. Babet questioned him.

"Have you nothing to say, Brujon?"

Brujon remained silent for a moment, then tossed his head in several different ways, and at length decided on speaking.

"Look here. I saw this morning two sparrows fighting, and to-night I stumble over a quarrelsome woman: all that is bad, so let us be off."

They went away, and while doing so Montparnasse muttered,—

"No matter, if you had been agreeable I would have cut her throat."

Babet replied,—

"I wouldn't, for I never strike a lady."

At the corner of the street they stopped and exchanged in a low voice this enigmatical dialogue.

"Where shall we go and sleep to-night?"

"Under Paris."

"Have you your key about you, Thénardier?"

"Of course."

Eponine, who did not take her eyes off them, saw them return by the road along which they had come. She rose and crawled after them, along the walls and the houses. She followed them thus along the boulevard; there they separated, and she saw the six men bury themselves in the darkness, where they seemed to fade away.

CHAPTER VIII.

MARIUS GIVES COSETTE HIS ADDRESS.

AFTER the departure of the bandits the rue Plumet resumed its calm, nocturnal aspect. What had just taken place in this street would not have astonished a forest, for the thickets, the coppices, the heather, the interlaced branches, and the tall grass, exist in a sombre way; the savage crowd catches glimpses there of the sudden apparitions of the invisible world. What there is below man distinguishes there through the mist what there is beyond man; and things unknown to us living beings confront each other there in the night. Bristling and savage nature is startled by certain approaches, in which it seems to feel the supernatural; the forces of the shadow know each other and maintain a mysterious equilibrium between themselves. Teeth and claws fear that which is unseizable, and blood-drinking bestiality, voracious, starving appetites in search of prey, the instincts armed with nails and jaws, which have for their source and object the stomach, look at and sniff anxiously the impulsive spectral lineaments prowling about in a winding-sheet or standing erect in this vaguely-rustling robe, and which seems to them to live a dead and terrible life. These brutalities, which are only matter, have a confused fear at having to deal with the immense condensed obscurity in an unknown being. A black figure barring the passage stops the wild beast short; what comes from the cemetery intimidates and disconcerts what comes from the den; ferocious things are afraid of sinister things, and wolves recoil on coming across a ghoul.

While this sort of human-faced dog was mounting guard against the railing, and six bandits fled before a girl, Marius was by Cosette's side. The sky had never been more star-spangled and more charming, the trees more rustling, or the smell of the grass more penetrating; never had the birds fallen asleep beneath the frondage with a softer noise; never had the universal harmonies of serenity responded better to the internal music of the soul; never had Marius been more enamoured, happier, or in greater ecstasy. But he had found Cosette sad, she had been crying, and her eyes were red. It was the first cloud in this admirable dream. Marius' first remark was,—

“What is the matter with you?”

And she replied,—

"I will tell you."

Then she sat down on the bench near the house, and while he took his seat, all trembling, by her side, she continued,—

"My father told me this morning to hold myself in readiness, for he had business to attend to, and we were probably going away."

Marius shuddered from head to foot. When we reach the end of life, death signifies a departure, but at the beginning, departure means death. For six weeks past Marius had slowly and gradually taken possession of Cosette; it was a perfectly ideal, but profound, possession. As we have explained, in first love men take the soul long before the body; at a later date they take the body before the soul, and at times they do not take the soul at all,—the Faublas and Prud-hommes add, because there is no such thing, but the sarcasm is fortunately a blasphemy. Marius, then, possessed Cosette in the way that minds possess; but he enveloped her with his entire soul, and jealously seized her with an incredible conviction. He possessed her touch, her breath, her perfume, the deep flash of her blue eyes, the softness of her skin when he touched her hand, the charming mark which she had on her neck, and all her thoughts. They had agreed never to sleep without dreaming of each other, and had kept their word. He, therefore, possessed all Cosette's dreams. He looked at her incessantly, and sometimes breathed on the short hairs which she had on her neck, and said to himself that there was not one of those hairs which did not belong to him. He contemplated and adored the things she wore, her bows, her cuffs, her gloves, and slippers, like sacred objects, of which he was the master. He thought that he was the lord of the small tortoiseshell combs which she had in her hair, and he said to himself, in the confused stammering of voluptuousness, that there was not a seam of her dress, not a mesh of her stockings, not a wrinkle in her bodice, which was not his. By the side of Cosette he felt close to his property, near his creature, who was at once his despot and his slave. It seemed that they had so blended their souls that, if they had wished to take them back, it would have been impossible for them to recognize them. This is mine—no, it is mine—I assure you that you are mistaken. This is really I—what you take for yourself is myself; Marius was something which formed part of Cosette, and Cosette was something that formed part of Marius. Marius felt Cosette live in him; to have Cosette, to possess Cosette, was to him not very different from breathing. It was in the midst of

this faith, this intoxication, this virgin, extraordinary, and absolute possession, and this sovranty, that the words "We are going away" suddenly fell on him, and the stern voice of reality shouted to him, "Cosette is not thine." Marius awoke. For six weeks, as we said, he had been living out of life, and the word "depart" made him roughly re-enter it. He could not find a word to say, and Cosette merely noticed that his hand was very cold. She said to him in her turn,—

"What is the matter with you?"

He answered, in so low a voice that Cosette could scarce hear him,—

"I do not understand what you said."

She continued,—

"This morning my father told me to prepare my clothes and hold myself ready, that he would give me his linen to put in a portmanteau, that he was obliged to make a journey, that we were going away, that we must have a large trunk for myself and a small one for him, to get all this ready within a week, and that we should probably go to England."

"Why, it is monstrous!" Marius exclaimed.

It is certain that, at this moment, in Marius' mind, no abuse of power, no violence, no abomination of the most prodigious tyrants, no deed of Busiris, Tiberius, or Henry VIII., equalled in ferocity this one,—M. Fauchelevent taking his daughter to England because he had business to attend to. He asked, in a faint voice,—

"And when will you start?"

"He did not say when."

"And when will you return?"

"He did not tell me."

And Marius rose and said coldly,—

"Will you go, Cosette?"

Cosette turned to him, her beautiful eyes full of agony, and answered, with a species of wildness,—

"Where?"

"To England; will you go?"

"What can I do?" she said, clasping her hands.

"Then you will go?"

"If my father goes."

"So you are determined to go?"

Cosette seized Marius' hand, and pressed it as sole reply.

"Very well," said Marius, "in that case I shall go elsewhere."

Cosette felt the meaning of this remark even more than

she comprehended it ; she turned so pale that her face became white in the darkness, and stammered,—

“ What do you mean ? ”

Marius looked at her, then slowly raised his eyes to heaven, and replied,—

“ Nothing.”

When he looked down again he saw Cosette smiling at him ; the smile of the woman whom we love has a brilliancy which is visible at night.

“ How foolish we are ! Marius, I have an idea.”

“ What is it ? ”

“ Follow us if we go away ! I will tell you whither ! and you can join me where I am.”

Marius was now a thoroughly wide-awake man, and had fallen back into reality ; hence he cried to Cosette,—

“ Go with you ! are you mad ? why, it would require money, and I have none ! Go to England ! why, I already owe more than ten louis to Courfeyrac, one of my friends, whom you do not know ! I have an old hat, which is not worth three francs, a coat with buttons missing in front, my shirt is all torn, my boots let in water, I am out at elbows, but I have not thought of it for six weeks, and did not tell you. Cosette, I am a wretch ; you only see me at night and give me your love : were you to see me by day you would give me a halfpenny. Go to England ! Why I have not enough to pay for the passport ! ”

He threw himself against a tree, with his arms over his head, and his forehead pressed to the bark, neither feeling the wood that grazed his skin nor the fever which spotted his temples, motionless and ready to fall, like the statue of despair. He remained for a long time in this state—people would remain for an eternity in such abysses. At length he turned and heard behind a little stifled, soft, and sad sound ; it was Cosette sobbing ; she had been crying for more than two hours by the side of Marius, who was reflecting. He went up to her, fell on his knees, seized her foot, which peeped out from under her skirt, and kissed it. She let him do so in silence, for there are moments when a woman accepts, like a sombre and resigned duty, the worship of love.

“ Do not weep,” he said.

She continued,—

“ But I am, perhaps, going away, and you are not able to come with me.”

He said, “ Do you love me ? ”

She replied by sobbing that Paradisaic word, which is never more charming than through tears, "I adore you."

He pursued, with an accent which was an inexpressible caress,—

"Do not weep. Will you do so much for me as to check your tears?"

"Do you love me?" she said.

He took her hand.

"Cosette, I have never pledged my word of honour to any one, because it frightens me, and I feel that my father is by the side of it. Well, I pledge you my most sacred word of honour that if you go away I shall die."

There was in the accent with which he uttered these words such a solemn and calm melancholy that Cosette trembled, and she felt that chill which is produced by the passing of a sombre and true thing. In her terror she ceased to weep.

"Now listen to me," he said; "do not expect me to-morrow."

"Why not?"

"Do not expect me till the day after."

"Oh, why?"

"You will see."

"A day without your coming!—oh, it is impossible."

"Let us sacrifice a day to have, perhaps, one whole life."

And Marius added in a low voice and aside,—"He is a man who makes no change in his habits, and he never received anybody before the evening."

"What man are you talking about?" Cosette asked.

"I? I did not say anything."

"What do you hope for, then?"

"Wait till the day after to-morrow."

"Do you desire it?"

"Yes, Cosette."

He took her head between his two hands, as she stood on tip-toe to reach him, and tried to see his hopes in his eyes. Marius added,—

"By the by, you must know my address, for something might happen; I live with my friend Courfeyrac, at No. 16, Rue de la Verrerie."

He felt in his pockets, took out a knife, and scratched the address on the plaster of the wall. In the mean while, Cosette had begun looking in his eyes again.

"Tell me your thought, Marius, for you have one. Tell it to me. Oh, tell it to me, so that I may pass a good night."

"My thought is this; it is impossible that God can wish to separate us. Expect me the day after to-morrow."

"What shall I do till then?" Cosette said. "You are in the world, and come and go; how happy men are! but I shall remain all alone. Oh, I shall be so sad! what will you do to-morrow night, tell me?"

"I shall try something."

"In that case I shall pray to heaven, and think of you, so that you may succeed. I will not question you any more, as you do not wish it, and you are my master. I will spend my evening in singing the song from *Euryanthe*, of which you are so fond, and which you heard one night under my shutters. But you will come early the next evening, and I shall expect you at nine o'clock exactly. I warn you. Oh, good Heaven! how sad it is that the days are so long! You hear; I shall be in the garden as it is striking nine."

"And I too."

And without saying a word, moved by the same thought, carried away by those electric currents which place two lovers in continual communication, both intoxicated with voluptuousness, even in their grief, fell into each other's arms without noticing that their lips were joined together, while their uppraised eyes, overflowing with ecstasy and full of tears, contemplated the stars. When Marius left, the street was deserted, for it was the moment when Eponine followed the bandits into the boulevard. While Marius dreamed with his head leaning against a tree an idea had crossed his mind, an idea, alas! which himself considered mad and impossible. He had formed a violent resolution.

CHAPTER IX.

AN OLD HEART AND A YOUNG HEART FACE EACH OTHER.

FATHER GILLENORMAND at this period had just passed his ninety-first birth-day, and still lived with his daughter at No. 6, Rue des Filles-de-Calvaire, in the old house, which was his own property. He was, it will be remembered, one of those antique old men whose age falls on without bending them, and whom even sorrow cannot bow. Still, for some time past, his daughter had said, "My father is breaking." He no longer

boxed the ears of the maid-servants, or banged so violently the staircase railing where Basque kept him waiting. The revolution of July had not exasperated him for more than six months, and he had seen almost with tranquillity in the *Moniteur* this association of words, M. Humblot-Conté, Peer of France. The truth is, that the old man was filled with grief; he did not bend, he did not surrender, for that was not possible, either with his moral or physical nature; but he felt himself failing inwardly. For four years he had been awaiting Marius with a firm foot, that is really the expression, with the conviction that the cursed young scamp would ring his bell some day, and now he had begun to say to himself that Marius might remain away a little too long. It was not death that was insupportable to him, but the idea that perhaps he might not see Marius again. This idea had never occurred to him till one day, and at present it rose before him constantly, and chilled him to death. Absence, as ever happens in natural and true feelings, had only heightened the grandfather's love for the ungrateful boy who had gone away like that, and it is on December nights, when the thermometer is almost down at zero, that people think most of the sun. M. Gillenormand was, or fancied himself, utterly incapable of taking a step toward his grandson; I would rot first, he said to himself. He did not think himself at all in the wrong, but he only thought of Marius with profound tenderness, and the dumb despair of an old man who is going down into the valley of the shadows. He was beginning to lose his teeth, which added to his sorrow. M. Gillenormand, without confessing it to himself, however, for he would have been furious and ashamed of it, had never loved a mistress as he loved Marius. He had hung up in his room, as the first thing he might see on awaking, an old portrait of his other daughter, the one who was dead, Madame de Pontmercy, taken when she was eighteen. He incessantly regarded this portrait, and happened to say one day, while gazing at it,—

“I can notice a likeness.”

“To my sister?” Mlle Gillenormand remarked, “oh, certainly.”

The old man added, “And to him too.”

When he was once sitting, with his knees against each other, and his eyes almost closed in a melancholy posture, his daughter ventured to say to him,—

“Father, are you still so furious against—?” She stopped, not daring to go further.

“Against whom?” he asked.

"That poor Marius."

He raised his old head, laid his thin wrinkled fist on the table, and cried, in his loudest and most irritated accent,—

"Poor Marius, you say ! that gentleman is a scoundrel, a scamp, a little vain ingrate, without heart or soul, a proud and wicked man !"

And he turned away, so that his daughter might not see a tear which he had in his eyes. Three days later he interrupted a silence which had lasted four hours to say to his daughter gruffly,—

"I had had the honour of begging Mademoiselle Gillenormand never to mention his name to me."

Aunt Gillenormand gave up all attempts, and formed this profound diagnostic; "My father was never very fond of my sister after her folly. It is clear that he detests Marius." "After her folly" meant, "since she married the colonel." Still, as may be conjectured, Mademoiselle Gillenormand failed in her attempt to substitute her favourite, the officer of lancers, in Marius' place. Theodule had met with no success, and M. Gillenormand refused to accept the *qui pro quo*; for the vacuum in the heart cannot be stopped by a bung. Theodule, on his side, while sniffing the inheritance, felt a repugnance to the duty of pleasing, and the old gentleman annoyed the lancer, while the lancer offended the old gentleman. Lieutenant Theodule was certainly gay but gossiping, frivolous but vulgar, a good liver but bad company ; he had mistresses, it is true, and he talked a good deal about them, it is also true, but then he talked badly. All his qualities had a defect, and M. Gillenormand was worn out with listening to the account of the few amours he had had round his barracks in the Rue Babylone. And then Lieutenant Theodule called sometimes in uniform with the tricolour cockade, which rendered him simply impossible. M. Gillenormand eventually said to his daughter, "I have had enough of Theodule, for I care but little for a warrior in peace times. You can receive him if you like, but for my part I do not know whether I do not prefer the sabrers to the trailing of sabres, and the clash of blades in a battle is less wretched, after all, than the noise of scabbards on the pavement. And, then, to throw up one's head like a king of clubs, and to lace one's self like a woman, to wear stays under a cuirass, is doubly ridiculous. When a man is a real man he keeps himself at an equal distance from braggadocio and foppishness. So keep your Theodule for yourself." Though his daughter said to him, "After all, he is your grand-nephew," it happened that M. Gillenormand, who was grandfather to the end of his

nails, was not a grand-uncle at all; the fact is, that as he was a man of sense and comparison, Theodule only served to make him regret Marius the more.

On the evening of June 4th, which did not prevent Father Gillenormand from having an excellent fire in his chimney, he had dismissed his daughter, who was sewing in the adjoining room. He was alone in his apartment with the pastoral hangings, with his feet on the andirons, half enveloped in his nine-leaved Coromandel screen, sitting at a table on which two candles burned under a green shade, swallowed up in his needle-worked easy chair, and holding a book in his hand, which he was not reading. He was dressed, according to his wont, as an "Incroyable," and resembled an old portrait of Garat. This would have caused him to be followed in the streets, but whenever he went out, his daughter wrapped him up in a sort of episcopal wadded coat, which hid his clothing. At home he never wore a dressing-gown, save when he got up and went to bed. "It gives an old look," he was wont to say. Father Gillenormand was thinking of Marius bitterly and lovingly, and, as usual, bitterness gained the upper hand. His savage tenderness always ended by boiling over and turning into indignation, and he was at the stage when a man seeks to make up his mind and accept that which is to be. He was explaining to himself that there was no longer any reason for Marius' return, that if he had meant to come home he would have done so long before, and all idea of it must be given up. He tried to form the idea that it was all over, and that he should die without seeing that "gentleman" again. But his whole nature revolted, and his old paternity could not consent. "What," he said, and it was his mournful burthen, "he will not come back!" and his old bald head fell on his chest, and he vaguely fixed a lamentable and irritated glance upon the ashes on his hearth. In the depth of this reverie his old servant Basque came in and asked,—

"Can you receive M. Marius, sir?"

The old man sat up, livid, and like a corpse which is roused by a galvanic shock. All his blood flowed to his heart, and he stammered,—

"M. Marius! who?"

"I do not know," Basque replied, intimidated and disconcerted by his master's air, "for I did not see him. It was Nicolette who said to me just now, 'There is a young man here, say it is M. Marius.'"

Father Gillenormand stammered in a low voice, "Show him in."

And he remained in the same attitude with hanging head and eye fixed on the door. It opened, and a young man appeared—it was Marius, who stopped in the door-way as if waiting to be asked in. His almost wretched clothes could not be seen in the obscurity produced by the shade, and only his calm, grave, but strangely sorrowful face could be distinguished. Father Gillenormand, as if stunned by stupor and joy, remained for a few minutes, seeing nothing but a brilliancy, as when an apparition rises before us. He was ready to faint, and perceived Marius through a mist. It was really he, it was really Marius! At length, after four years! He took him in entirely, so to speak, at a glance, and found him handsome, noble, distinguished, grown, a thorough man, with a proper attitude and a charming air. He felt inclined to open his arms and call the boy to him, his entrails were swelled with ravishment, affectionate words welled up and overflowed his bosom. At length all this tenderness burst forth and reached his lips, and through the contrast which formed the basis of his character a harshness issued from it. He said roughly,—

“What do you want here?”

Marius replied with an embarrassed air,—

“Sir—”

Monsieur Gillenormand would have liked for Marius to throw himself into his arms, and he was dissatisfied both with Marius and himself. He felt that he was rough and Marius cold, and it was an insupportable and irritating anxiety to the old gentleman to feel himself so tender and imploring within, and unable to be otherwise than harsh externally. His bitterness returned, and he abruptly interrupted Marius.

“In that case why do you come?”

The “in that case” meant “*if you have not come to embrace me.*” Marius gazed at his ancestor’s marble face.

“Sir—”

The old gentleman resumed in a stern voice,—

“Have you come to ask my pardon? have you recognized your error?”

He believed that he was putting Marius on the right track, and that “the boy” was going to give way. Marius trembled, for it was a disavowal of his father that was asked of him, and he lowered his eyes and replied, “No, sir.”

“Well, in that case,” the old man exclaimed impetuously, and with a sharp sorrow full of anger, “what is it you want of me?”

Marius clasped his hands, advanced a step, and said, in a weak, trembling voice,—

"Take pity on me, sir."

This word moved M. Gillenormand ; had it come sooner it would have softened him, but it came too late. The old gentleman rose, and rested both hands on his cane ; his lips were white, his forehead vacillated, but his lofty stature towered over the stooping Marius.

"Pity on you, sir ! the young man asks pity of an old man of ninety-one ! You are entering life, and I am leaving it ; you go to the play, to balls, to the coffee-house, the billiard-table ; you are witty, you please women, you are a pretty fellow, while I spit on my logs in the middle of summer ; you are rich with the only wealth there is, while I have all the poverty of old age, infirmity, and isolation. You have your two-and-thirty teeth, a good stomach, a quick eye, strength, appetite, health, gaiety, a forest of black hair, while I have not even my white hair left. I have lost my teeth, I am losing my legs, I am losing my memory, for there are three names of streets which I incessantly confound, the Rue Charlot, the Rue du Chaume, and the Rue St Claude. Such is my state ; you have a whole future before you, full of sunshine, while I am beginning to see nothing, as I have advanced so far into night. You are in love, that is a matter of course, while I am not beloved by a soul in the world, and yet you ask me for pity ! By Jove, Molière forgot that. If that is the way in which you barristers jest at the palace of justice, I compliment you most sincerely upon it, for you are droll fellows."

And the octogenarian added, in a serious and wrathful voice,—

"Well, what is it you want of me ?"

"I am aware, sir," said Marius, "that my presence here displeases you, but I have only come to ask one thing of you, and then I shall go away at once."

"You are a fool," the old man said ; "who told you to go away ?"

This was the translation of the tender words which he had at the bottom of his heart. "Ask my pardon, why don't you ? and throw your arms round my neck." M. Gillenormand felt that Marius was going to leave him in a few moments, that his bad reception offended him, and that his harshness expelled him ; he said all this to himself, and his grief was augmented by it ; as his grief immediately turned into passion and his harshness grew the greater. He had wished that Marius should understand, and Marius did not understand, which rendered the old gentleman furious. He continued,—

"What! you insulted me, your grandfather; you left my house to go the Lord knows whither; you broke your aunt's heart; you went away to lead a bachelor's life, of course that's more convenient, to play the fop, come home at all hours, and amuse yourself; you have given me no sign of life, you have incurred debts without even asking me to pay them, you have been a breaker of windows and a brawler, and at the end of four years you return to my house and have nothing more to say to me than that!"

This violent way of forcing the grandson into tenderness only produced silence on the part of Marius. M. Gillenormand folded his arms, a gesture which with him was peculiarly imperious, and bitterly addressed Marius,—

"Let us come to an end. You have come to ask something of me, you say! well, what is it? speak."

"Sir," said Marius, with the look of a man who feels that he is going to fall over a precipice, "I have come to ask your permission to marry."

M. Gillenormand rang the bell, and Basque poked his head into the door.

"Send my daughter here."

A second later, the door opened again, and Mlle Gillenormand did not enter, but showed herself. Marius was standing silently, with drooping arms and the face of a criminal, while M. Gillenormand walked up and down the room. He turned to his daughter and said to her,—

"It is nothing. This is M. Marius, wish him good evening. This gentleman desires to marry, that will do. Be off."

The sound of the old man's sharp, hoarse voice announced a mighty fury raging within him. The aunt looked at Marius in terror, seemed scarce to recognize him, did not utter a syllable, and disappeared before her father's breath, like a straw before a hurricane. In the meanwhile M. Gillenormand had turned back, and was now leaning against the mantel-piece.

"You marry! at the age of one-and-twenty! you have settled all that, and have only a permission to ask, a mere formality! Sit down, sir. Well, you have had a revolution since I had the honour of seeing you last, the Jacobins had the best of it, and you are of course pleased; are you not a republican since you became a baron? those two things go famously together, and the republic is a sauce for the barony. Are you one of the decorated of July? did you give your small aid to take the Louvre, sir? Close by, in the Rue St Antoine, opposite the Rue des Nonaindières, there is a cannon-ball imbedded in the wall of a house three storeys up, with the inscription, July

28, 1830. Go and look at it, for it produces a famous effect. Ah! your friends do very pretty things! By the way, are they not erecting a fountain on the site of the Duc de Berry's monument. So you wish to marry? May I ask, without any indiscretion, who the lady is?"

He stopped, and before Marius had time to answer, he added violently,—

"Ah! have you a profession, a fortune? how much do you earn by your trade as a lawyer?"

"Nothing," said Marius, with a sort of fierceness and almost stern resolution.

"Nothing? then you have only the twelve hundred livres which I allow you to live on?"

Marius made no reply, and M. Gillenormand continued,—

"In that case, I presume that the young lady is wealthy?"

"Like myself."

"What? no dowry?"

"No."

"Any expectations?"

"I do not think so."

"Quite naked! and what is the father?"

"I do not know."

"And what is her name?"

"Mademoiselle Fauchelevent."

"Mademoiselle Fauchewhat?"

"Fauchelevent."

"Ptt!" said the old gentleman.

"Sir!" Marius exclaimed.

M. Gillenormand interrupted him, with the air of a man who is talking to himself,—

"That is it, one-and-twenty, no profession, twelve hundred livres a year, and the Baroness Pontmercy will go and buy a penn'orth of parsley at the green-grocer's."

"Sir," Marius replied in the wildness of the last vanishing hope, "I implore you, I conjure you in Heaven's name, with clasped hands I throw myself at your feet,—sir, permit me to marry her!"

The old man burst into a sharp, melancholy laugh, through which he coughed and spoke,—

"Ah, ah, ah! you said to yourself, 'I'll go and see that old periwig, that absurd ass! What a pity that I am not five-and-twenty yet, how I would send him a respectful summons! Old fool, you are too glad to see me, I feel inclined to marry Miss Lord-knows-who, the daughter of M. Lord-knows-what.'

She has no shoes, and I have no shirt, that matches ; I am inclined to throw into the river my career, my youth, my future, my life, and take a plunge into wretchedness with a wife round my neck—that is my idea, and you must consent : and the old fossil will consent. Go in, my lad, fasten your paving-stone round your neck, marry your Pousselevent, your Coupelevent,—never, sir, never!"

"Father—"

"Never!"

Marius lost all hope through the accent with which this "never" was pronounced. He crossed the room slowly, with hanging head, tottering, and more like a man that is dying than one who is going away. M. Gillenormand looked after him, and at the moment when the door opened and Marius was about to leave the room he took four strides with the senile vivacity of an impetuous and spoiled old man, seized Marius by the collar, pulled him back energetically into the room, threw him into an easy chair, and said,—

"Tell me all about it."

The word *father* which had escaped from Marius' lips produced this revolution. Marius looked at M. Gillenormand haggardly, but his inflexible face expressed nought now but a rough and ineffable goodness. The ancestor had made way for the grandfather.

"Well, speak ; tell me of your love episodes, tell me all. Sapristi ! how stupid young men are!"

"My father!" Marius resumed.

The old gentleman's entire face was lit up with an indescribable radiance.

"Yes, that is it, call me father, and you'll see."

There was now something so gentle, so good, so open, and so paternal, in this sharpness, that Marius, in this sudden passage from discouragement to hope, was, as it were, stunned and intoxicated. As he was seated near the table the light of the candles fell on his seedy attire, which Father Gillenormand studied with amazement.

"Well, father," said Marius.

"What," M. Gillenormand interrupted him, "have you really no money ? You are dressed like a thief."

He felt in a drawer and pulled out a purse, which he laid on the table.

"Here are one hundred louis to buy a hat with."

"My father," Marius continued, "my kind father. If you only knew how I love her ! You cannot imagine it. The first time I saw her was at the Luxembourg, where she came to

walk. At the beginning I paid no great attention to her, and then I know not how it happened, but I fell in love with her. Oh ! how wretched it made me. I see her now every day at her own house, and her father knows nothing about it: just fancy, they are going away, we see each other at night in the garden, her father means to take her to England, and then I said to myself, 'I will go and see my grandfather and tell him about it.' I should go mad first, I should die, I should have a brain fever, I should throw myself into the water. I must marry her, or else I shall go mad. That is the whole truth, and I do not believe that I have forgotten anything. She lives in a garden with a railing to it, in the Rue Plumet: it is on the side of the Invalides."

Father Gillenormand was sitting radiantly by Marius' side: while listening and enjoying the sound of his voice he enjoyed at the same time a lengthened pinch of snuff. At the words Rue Plumet he broke off his sniffing, and allowed the rest of the snuff to fall on his knees.

"Rue Plumet ! did you say Rue Plumet ? only think ! Is there not a barrack down there ? oh yes, of course there is : your cousin, Theodule, the officer, the lancer, told me about it—a poppet, my dear fellow, a poppet ! By Jove, yes, Rue Plumet, which used formerly to be called Rue Blomet. I remember it all now, and I have heard about the little girl behind the railings in the Rue Plumet. In a garden. A Pamela. Your taste is not bad. I am told she is very tidy. Between ourselves, I believe that ass of a lancer has courted her a little, I do not exactly know how far matters have gone, but, after all, that is of no consequence. Besides, there is no believing him, for he boasts. Marius ! I think it very proper that a young man like you should be in love, for it becomes your age, and I would sooner have you in love than a Jacobin. I would rather know you caught by a petticoat, ay, by twenty petticoats, than by Monsieur de Robespierre. For my part, I do myself the justice of saying that, as regards sans-culottes, I never loved any but women. Pretty girls are pretty girls, hang it all ! and there is no harm in that. And so she receives you behind her father's back, does she ? that's all right, and I had affairs of the same sort, more than one. Do you know what a man does in such cases ? he does not regard the matter ferociously, he does not hurl himself into matrimony, or conclude with marriage and M. le Maire in his scarf. No, he is very stupidly a sharp fellow, and a man of common sense. Glide, mortals, but do not marry. Such a young man goes to his grandfather, who is well inclined after all, and who

has always a few rolls of Louis in an old drawer, and he says to him, ‘Grandpapa, that’s how matters stand,’ and grandpapa says, ‘It is very simple, youth must enjoy itself, and old age be smashed up. I have been young and you will be old. All right, my lad, you will requite it to your grandson. Here are two hundred pistoles, go and amuse yourself, confound you!’ that is the way in which the matter should be arranged; a man does not marry, but that is no obstacle: do you understand?’

Marius, petrified and incapable of uttering a word, shook his head in the negative. The old gentleman burst into a laugh, winked his aged eyelid, tapped him on the knee, looked at him between the eyes with a mysterious and radiant air, and said with the tenderest shrug of the shoulders possible,—

“ You goose! make her your mistress!”

Marius turned pale; he had understood nothing of what his grandfather had been saying, and this maundering about the Rue Blomet, Pamela, the barracks, the lancer, had passed before Marius like a phantasmagoria. Nothing of all this could affect Cosette who was a lily, and the old gentleman was wandering. But this derogation had resulted in a sentence which Marius understood, and which was a mortal insult to Cosette, and the words, *Make her your mistress*, passed through the stern young man’s heart like a sword-blade. He rose, picked up his hat which was on the ground, and walked to the door with a firm, assured step. Then he turned, gave his grandfather a low bow, drew himself up again, and said,—

“ Five years ago you outraged my father; to-day you outraged my wife. I have nothing more to ask of you, sir; farewell!”

Father Gillenormand, who was stupefied, opened his mouth, stretched out his arms, strove to rise, and ere he was able to utter a word, the door had closed again, and Marius had disappeared. The old gentleman remained for a few minutes motionless, and as if thunderstruck, unable to speak or breathe, as though a garotter’s hand were compressing his throat. At length he tore himself out of his easy chair, ran to the door as fast as a man can run at ninety-one, opened it, and cried,—

“ Help! help!”

His daughter appeared, and then his servants; he went on with a lamentable rattle in his throat,—

“ Run after him! catch him up! how did I offend him? he is mad and going away! Oh Lord, oh Lord! this time he will not return.”

He went to the window which looked on the street, opened

it with his old trembling hands, bent half his body out of it, while Basque and Nicolette held his skirts, and cried,—

“Marius! Marius! Marius! Marius!”

But Marius could not hear him, for at this very moment he was turning the corner of the Rue St Louis. The nonagenarian raised his hands twice or thrice to his temples with an expression of agony, tottered back, and sank into an easy chair, pulseless, voiceless, and tearless, shaking his head and moving his lips with a stupid air, and having nothing left in his eyes or heart but a profound and gloomy rigidity which resembled night.

CHAPTER X.

THE TWO WARNINGS.

THAT same day, about four in the afternoon, Jean Valjean was seated on one of the most solitary slopes of the Champ de Mars. Either through prudence, a desire to reflect, or simply in consequence of one of those insensible changes of habits which gradually introduce themselves into all existences, he now went out very rarely with Cosette. He had on his workman's jacket and grey canvas trousers, and his long peaked cap concealed his face. He was at present calm and happy by Cosette's side; what had startled and troubled him for a while was dissipated; but, during the last week or fortnight, anxieties of a fresh nature had sprung up. One day, while walking along the boulevard, he noticed Thénardier; thanks to his disguise, Thénardier did not recognize him, but after that Jean Valjean saw him several times again, and now felt a certainty that Thénardier was prowling about the quarter. This was sufficient to make him form a grand resolution, for Thénardier present was every peril at once; moreover, Paris was not quiet, and political troubles offered this inconvenience to any man who had something in his life to hide, that the police had become very restless and suspicious, and, when trying to find a man like Pepin or Morey, might very easily discover a man like Jean Valjean. He, therefore, resolved to leave Paris, even France, and go to England; he had warned Cosette, and hoped to be off within a week. He was sitting on the slope, revolving in his mind all sorts of thoughts,—Thénardier, the police, the

journey, and the difficulty of obtaining a passport. From all these points of view he was anxious ; and lastly, an inexplicable fact, which had just struck him, and from which he was still hot, added to his alarm. On the morning of that very day he, the only person up in the house, and walking in the garden before Cosette's shutters were opened, suddenly perceived this line on the wall, probably scratched with a nail,—

16, Rue de la Verrerie.

It was quite recent, the lines were white on the old black mortar, and a bed of nettles at the foot of the wall was powdered with fine fresh plaster. This had probably been inscribed during the night. What was it ? an address ? a signal for others, or a warning for himself ? In any case, it was evident that the secrecy of the garden was violated, and that strangers entered it. He remembered the strange incidents which had already alarmed the house, and his mind was at work on this subject ; but he was careful not to say a word to Cosette about the line written on the wall, for fear of alarming her. In the midst of his troubled thoughts he perceived, from a shadow which the sun threw, that some one was standing on the crest of the slope immediately behind him. He was just going to turn, when a folded paper fell on his knees, as if a hand had thrown it over his head ; he opened the paper, and read these words, written in large characters, and in pencil,—

LEAVE YOUR HOUSE.

Jean Valjean rose smartly, but there was no longer any one on the slope ; he looked round him, and perceived a person, taller than a child and shorter than a man, dressed in a grey blouse and dust-coloured cotton-velvet trousers, bestriding the parapet, and slipping down into the moat of the Champ de Mars. Jean Valjean at once went home very pensively.

Marius had left M. Gillenormand's house in a wretched state ; he had gone in with very small hopes, and came out with an immense despair. However—those who have watched the beginning of the human heart will comprehend it—the lancer, the officer, the fop, cousin Theodule, had left no shadow on his mind, not the slightest. The dramatic poet might apparently hope for some complications to be produced by this revelation, so coarsely made to the grandson by the grandfather, but what the drama would gain by it truth would lose. Marius was at that age when a man believes nothing that is wrong ; later comes the age when he believes everything. Suspicions are only wrinkles, and early youth has none ; what upsets Othello glides over

Candide. Suspect Cosette? Marius could have committed a multitude of crimes more easily. He began walking about the streets, the resource of those who suffer, and he thought of nothing which he might have remembered. At two in the morning he went to Courfeyrac's lodging, and threw himself on his mattress full dressed: it was bright sunshine when he fell asleep, with that frightful oppressive sleep which allows ideas to come and go in the brain. When he awoke he saw Courfeyrac, Enjolras, Feuilly, and Combeferre, all ready to go out, and extremely busy. Courfeyrac said to him,—

“Are you coming to General Lamarque’s funeral?”

It seemed to him as if Courfeyrac were talking Chinese. He went out shortly after them, and put in his pockets the pistols which Javert had intrusted to him at the affair of Feb. 3, and which still remained in his possession. They were still loaded, and it would be difficult to say what obscure notion he had in his brain when he took them up. The whole day he wandered about, without knowing where; it rained at times, but he did not perceive it; he bought for his dinner a half-penny roll, put it in his pocket, and forgot it. It appears that he took a bath in the Seine without being conscious of it, for there are moments when a man has a furnace under his skull, and Marius had reached one of those moments. He hoped for nothing, feared nothing now, and had taken this step since the previous day. He awaited the evening with a feverish impatience, for he had but one clear idea left, that at nine o’clock he should see Cosette. This last happiness was now his sole future, after that came the shadow. At times, while walking along the most deserted boulevards, he imagined that he could hear strange noises in Paris; then he thrust his head out of his reverie, and said,—“Can they be fighting?” At night-fall, at nine o’clock precisely, he was at the Rue Plumet, as he had promised Cosette. He had not seen her for eight-and-forty hours, he was about to see her again. Every other thought was effaced, and he only felt an extraordinary and profound joy. Those minutes in which men live ages have this sovereign and admirable thing about them, that, at the moment when they pass, they entirely occupy the heart.

Marius removed the railing and rushed into the garden. Cosette was not at the place where she usually waited for him, and he crossed the garden, and went to the niche near the terrace. “She is waiting for me there,” he said, but Cosette was not there. He raised his eyes and saw that the shutters of the house were closed; he walked round the garden, and the garden was deserted. Then he returned to the garden, and,

mad with love, terrified, exasperated with grief and anxiety, he rapped at the shutters, like a master who returns home at a late hour. He rapped, he rapped again, at the risk of seeing the window open and the father's frowning face appear, and ask him,—“What do you want?” This was nothing to what he caught a glimpse of. When he had rapped, he raised his voice, and called Cosette. “Cosette!” he cried: “Cosette!” he repeated imperiously. There was no answer, and it was all over; there was no one in the garden, no one in the house. Marius fixed his desperate eyes on this mournful house, which was as black, as silent, and more empty, than a tomb. He gazed at the stone bench on which he had spent so many adorable hours by Cosette’s side; then he sat down on the garden steps, with his heart full of gentleness and resolution; he blessed his love in his heart, and said to himself that since Cosette was gone all left him was to die. All at once he heard a voice which seemed to come from the street, crying through the trees,—

“ Monsieur Marius !”

He drew himself up.

“ Hilloh ?” he said.

“ Are you there, M. Marius ?”

“ Yes.”

“ Monsieur Marius,” the voice resumed, “ your friends are waiting for you at the barricade in the Rue de la Chancrerie.”

This voice was not entirely strange to him, and resembled Eponine’s rough, hoarse accents. Marius ran to the railings, pulled aside the shifting bar, passed his head through, and saw some one, who seemed to be a young man, running away in the gloaming.

CHAPTER XI.

M. MABŒUF.

JEAN VALJEAN’s purse was useless to M. Mabœuf, who, in his venerable childish austerity, had not accepted the gift of the stars; he had not allowed that a star could coin itself into louis d’or, and he had not guessed that what fell from heaven came from Gavroche. Hence he carried the purse to the police

commissary of the district, as a lost object, placed by the finder at the disposal of the claimants. The purse was really lost, we need hardly say that no one claimed it, and it did not help M. Mabœuf. In other respects M. Mabœuf had continued to descend: and the indigo experiments had succeeded no better at the Jardin des Plantes than in his garden of Austerlitz. The previous year he owed his housekeeper her wages, and now, as we have seen, he owed his landlord his rent. The Government pawnbrokers' office sold the copper-plates of his *Flora*, at the expiration of thirteen months, and some brazier had made stew-pans of them. When his plates had disappeared, as he could no longer complete the unbound copies of his *Flora*, which he still possessed, he sold off plates and text to a second-hand bookseller, as defective. Nothing was then left him of the labour of his whole life, and he began eating the money produced by the copies. When he saw that this poor resource was growing exhausted he gave up his garden, and did not attend to it; before, and long before, he had given up the two eggs and the slice of beef which he ate from time to time, and now dined on bread and potatoes. He had sold his last articles of furniture, then everything he had in duplicate, in linen, clothes, and coverlids, and then his herbals and plates; but he still had his most precious books, among them being several of great rarity, such as the "Les Quadrins Historiques de la Bible," the edition of 1560; "La Concordance des Bibles," of Pierre de Besse; "Les Marguerites de la Marguerite," of Jean de la Haye, with a dedication to the Queen of Navarre; the work on the "duties and dignity of an ambassador," by the Sieur de Villiers Hotman; a "Florilegium Rabbinicum," of 1644; a "Tibullus," of 1567, with the splendid imprint "*Venetiis, in ædibus Manutianis*," and lastly a "Diogenes Laertius," printed at Lyons in 1644, in which were the famous various readings of the Vatican MS. 411, of the thirteenth century, and those of the two Venetian *codices* 393 and 394, so usefully consulted by Henri Estiennes, and all the passages in the Doric dialect, only to be found in the celebrated twelfth century MS. of the Naples library. M. Mabœuf never lit a fire in his room, and went to bed with the sun, in order not to burn a candle; it seemed as if he no longer had neighbours, for they shunned him when he went out, and he noticed it. The wretchedness of a child interests a mother, the wretchedness of a youth interests an old man, but the wretchedness of an old man interests nobody, and it is the coldest of all distresses. Still M. Mabœuf had not entirely lost his childlike serenity; his eye acquired some vivacity when it settled on his books,

and he smiled when he regarded the *Diogenes Laertius*, which was a unique copy. His glass case was the only furniture which he had retained beyond what was indispensable. One day Mother Plutarch said to him,—

“I have no money to buy dinner with.”

What she called dinner consisted of a loaf and four or five potatoes.

“Can’t you get it on credit?” said M. Mabœuf.

“You know very well that it is refused me.”

M. Mabœuf opened his book-case, looked for a long time at all his books in turn, as a father, obliged to decimate his children, would look at them before selecting, then took one up quickly, put it under his arm, and went out. He returned two hours after with nothing under his arm, laid thirty sous on the table, and said,—

“You will get some dinner.”

From this moment Mother Plutarch saw a dark veil, which was not raised again, settle upon the old gentleman’s candid face. The next day, the next after that, and every day, M. Mabœuf had to begin again; he went out with a book and returned with a piece of silver. As the second-hand book-sellers saw that he was compelled to sell they bought for twenty sous books for which he had paid twenty francs, and frequently to the same dealers. Volume by volume his whole library passed away, and he said at times “and yet I am eighty years of age,” as if he had some lurking hope that he should reach the end of his days ere he reached the end of his books. His sorrow grew, but once he had a joy: he went out with a *Robert Estienne*, which he sold for thirty-five sous on the Quai Malaquais, and came home with an *Aldus* which he had bought for forty sous in the Rue de Grès. “I owe five sous,” he said quite radiantly to Mother Plutarch, but that day he did not dine. He belonged to the Horticultural Society, and his poverty was known. The President of the Society called on him, promised to speak about him to the Minister of Commerce and Agriculture, and did so. “What do you say?” the minister exclaimed, “I should think so! an old savant! a botanist! an inoffensive man! we must do something for him.” The next day M. Mabœuf received an invitation to dine with the minister, and, trembling with joy, showed the letter to Mother Plutarch. “We are saved!” he said. On the appointed day he went to the minister’s, and noticed that his ragged cravat, his long, square-cut coat, and shoes varnished with white of egg, astounded the footman. No one spoke to him, not even the minister, and at about ten in the evening, while

still waiting for a word, he heard the minister's wife, a handsome lady in a low-necked dress, whom he had not dared to approach, ask, "Who can that old gentleman be?" He went home a-foot at midnight through the pouring rain; he had sold an *Elzevir*, to pay his hackney coach in going.

Every evening, before going to bed, he had fallen into the habit of reading a few pages of his *Diogenes Laertius*; for he knew enough of Greek to enjoy the peculiarities of the text which he possessed, and had no other joy now left him. A few weeks passed away, and all at once Mother Plutarch fell ill. There is one thing even more sad than having no money to buy bread at a baker's, and that is, not to have money to buy medicine at the chemist's. One night the doctor had ordered a most expensive potion, and then the disease grew worse, and a nurse was necessary. M. Mabœuf opened his book-case, but there was nothing left in it; the last volume had departed, and the only thing left him was the *Diogenes Laertius*. He placed the unique copy under his arm and went out—it was June 4, 1832; he proceeded to Royol's successor at the Porte St Jacques, and returned with one hundred francs. He placed the pile of five-franc pieces on the old servant's table, and entered his bed-room without uttering a syllable. At dawn of the next day he seated himself on the overturned post in his garden, and over the hedge he might have been seen the whole morning, motionless, with drooping head, and eyes vaguely fixed on the faded flower-beds. It rained every now and then, but the old man did not seem to notice it: but in the afternoon extraordinary noises broke out in Paris, resembling musket-shots, and the clamour of a multitude. Father Mabœuf raised his head, noticed a gardener passing, and said,—

"What is the matter?"

The gardener replied, with the spade on his back, and with the most peaceful accent,—

"It's the rebels."

"What! rebels?"

"Yes, they are fighting."

"Why are they fighting?"

"The Lord alone knows," said the gardener.

"In what direction?"

"Over by the arsenal."

Father Mabœuf went into his house, took his hat, mechanically sought for a book to place under his arm, found none, said, "Ah, it is true!" and went out with a wandering look.

CHAPTER XII.

A DIFFICULT PROBLEM TO SOLVE.

OF what is a revolt composed? of nothing and of everything, of an electricity suddenly disengaged, of a flame which suddenly breaks out, of a wandering strength and a passing breath. This breath meets with heads that talk, brains that dream, souls that suffer, passions that burn, and miseries which yell, and carries them off with it. Whither? it is chance work; through the state, through the laws, through prosperity and the insolence of others. Irritated convictions, embittered enthusiasms, aroused indignations, martial instincts suppressed, youthful courage exalted, and generous blindnesses; curiosity, a taste for a change, thirst for something unexpected, the feeling which causes us to find pleasure in reading the announcement of a new piece, or on hearing the Machinist's whistle; vague hatreds, rancours, disappointments, every vanity which believes that destiny has been a bankrupt to it; straitened circumstances, empty dreams, ambitions surrounded with escarpments, every man who hopes for an issue from an overthrow, and, lastly, at the very bottom, the mob, that mud which takes fire—such are the elements of riot. The greatest and the most infamous, beings who prowl about beyond the pale of everything while awaiting an opportunity, gipsies, nameless men, highway vagabonds, the men who sleep o' nights in a desert of houses with no other roof but the cold clouds of heaven, those who daily ask their bread of chance, and not of toil; the unknown men of wretchedness and nothingness, bare arms and bare feet, belong to the riot. Every man who has in his soul a secret revolt against any act of the state, of life, or of destiny, is on the border line of riot, and so soon as it appears, he begins to quiver and to feel himself lifted by the whirlwind.

Riot is a species of social atmospheric waterspout, which is suddenly formed in certain conditions of temperature, and which in its revolutions mounts, runs, thunders, tears up, razes, crushes, demolishes, and uproots, bearing with it grand and paltry natures, the strong man and the weak mind, the trunk of a tree and the wisp of straw. Woe to the man whom it carries as well as to the one it dashes at, for it breaks one against the other. It communicates to those whom it seizes a

strange and extraordinary power ; it fills the first comer with the force of events and converts everything into projectiles ; it makes a cannon-ball of a stone, and a general of a porter. If we may believe certain oracles of the crafty policy, a little amount of riot is desirable from the governing point of view. The system is, that riot strengthens those governments which it does not overthrow ; it tries the army ; it concentrates the bourgeoisie, strengthens the muscles of the police, and displays the force of the social fulcrum. It is a lesson in gymnastics, and almost a Turkish bath, and power feels better after a riot, as a man does after a rubbing down. Riot, thirty years ago, was also regarded from other stand-points. There is for everything a theory which proclaims itself as "common sense," a mediation offered between the true and the false : explanation, admonition, and a somewhat haughty extenuation which, because it is composed of blame and apology, believes itself wisdom, and is often nothing but pedantry. An entire political school, called the "Juste milieu," emanated from this, and between cold water and hot water there is the lukewarm water party. This school, with its false depth entirely superficial, which dissects effects without going back to causes, scolds, from the elevation of semi-science, the agitations of the public streets.

If we listen to this school we hear ; "the riots which complicated the deed of 1830 deprived that grand event of a portion of its purity. The revolution of July was a fine blast of the popular wind, suddenly followed by a blue sky, and the riot caused a cloudy sky to reappear, and compelled the revolution, originally so remarkable through unanimity, to degenerate into a quarrel. In the revolution of July, as in every progress produced by a jerk, there were secret fractures which riots cause to be noticed. After the revolution of July only the deliverance was felt, but after the riots the catastrophe was felt. Every riot closes shops, depresses the funds, consternates the Stock Exchange, suspends trade, checks business, and entails bankruptcies : there is no money, trade is disconcerted, capital is withdrawn, labour is at a discount, there is fear everywhere, and counterstrokes take place in every city, whence come gulfs. It is calculated that the first day of riot costs France twenty millions of francs, the second forty, and the third sixty. Hence a riot of three days costs one hundred and twenty millions, that is to say, if we only regard the financial result, is equivalent to a disaster, shipwreck, or lost action, which might annihilate a fleet of sixty vessels of the line. Indubitably, riots, historically regarded, had their beauty : the war of the paving-stones is no less grand or pathetic than the war of thickets : in the one

there is the soul of forests, in the other the heart of cities : one has Jean Chouan, the other has Jeanne. Riots lit up luridly but splendidly all the most original features of the Parisian character,—generosity, devotion, stormy gaiety, students proving that bravery forms a part of intellect, the National Guard unswerving, bivouacs formed by shop-keepers, fortresses held by gamins, and contempt of death in the passers-by. Schools and legions came into collision, but, after all, there was only the difference of age between the combatants, and they are the same race ; the same stoical men who die at the age of twenty for their ideas, and at forty for their families ; the army, ever sad in civil wars, opposed prudence to audacity ; and the riots, while manifesting the popular intrepidity, were the education of the bourgeois courage. That is all very well, but is all this worth the blood shed ? And then add to the bloodshed the future darkened, progress compromised, anxiety among the better classes, honest liberals despairing, foreign absolutism delighted at these wounds dealt to revolution by itself, and the conquered of 1830 triumphing and shouting, ‘Did we not say so?’ Add Paris possibly aggrandized, France assuredly diminished. Add — for we must tell the whole truth — the massacres which too often dishonoured the victory of order, which became ferocious, over liberty which went mad, and we must arrive at the conclusion that riots have been fatal.”

Thus speaks that almost wisdom with which the bourgeoisie, that almost people, are so readily contented. For our part, we regret the word riots, as being too wide, and consequently too convenient, and make a distinction between one popular movement and another ; we do not ask ourselves whether a riot costs as much as a battle. In the first place, why a battle ? here the question of war arises. Is war less a scourge than riot is a calamity ? and, then, are all riots calamities ? and even supposing that July 14th cost one hundred and twenty millions, the establishment of Philip V. in Spain cost France two billions, and even were the price equal we should prefer the 14th July. Besides, we repulse these figures, which seem reasons and are only words, and a riot being given, we examine it in itself. In all that the doctrinaire objection we have just reproduced says, the only question is about effect, and we are seeking for the cause.

There is riot, and there is insurrection ; they are two passions, one of which is just, the other unjust. In democratic states, the only ones based on justice, it sometimes happens that the fraction usurps power ; in that case, the whole people rises, and the necessary demand for its rights may go so far as

taking up arms. In all the questions which result from collective sovereignty the war of all against the fraction is insurrection, and the attack of the fraction on the masses is a riot ; according as the Tuileries contain the king or the convention they are justly or unjustly attacked. The same guns pointed at the mob are in the wrong on Aug. 14th, and in the right on the 14th Vendemiaire. Their appearance is alike, but the base is different ; the Swiss defend what is false, and Bonaparte what is true. What universal suffrage has done in its liberty and its sovereignty cannot be undone by the street. It is the same in matters of pure civilization, and the instinct of the masses, clear-sighted yesterday, may be perturbed to-morrow. The same fury is legitimate against Terray and absurd against Turgot. Smashing engines, pillaging store-houses, tearing up rails, the demolition of docks, the false roads of multitude, the denial of popular justice to progress, Ramus assassinated by the scholars, and Rousseau expelled from Switzerland by stones—all this is riot. Israel rising against Moses, Athens against Phocion, Rome against Scipio, are riots, while Paris attacking the Bastille is insurrection. The soldiers opposing Alexander, the sailors mutinying against Christopher Columbus, are the same revolt, an impious revolt ; why ? because Alexander does for Asia with the sword what Columbus does for America with the compass ; Alexander, like Columbus, finds a world. These gifts of a world to civilization are such increments of light, that any resistance in such a case is culpable. At times the people breaks its fidelity to itself, and the mob behave treacherously to the people. Can anything, for instance, be stranger than the long and sanguinary protest of the false Saulniers, a legitimate chronic revolt which at the decisive moment, on the day of salvation, and in the hour of the popular victory, espouses the throne, turns into chouannerie, and from an insurrection against the government becomes a riot for it ! These are gloomy masterpieces of ignorance ! The false Saulniers escapes from the royal gallows, and with the noose still round his neck mounts the white cockade. “Death to the salt taxes” brings into the world, “Long live the king.” The killers of St Bartholomew, the murderers of September, the massacres of Avignon, the assassins of Coligny, of Madame de Lamballe, the assassins of Brue, the Miquelets, the Verdets, and the Cadenettes, the Companions of Jehu, and the Chevaliers du Brassard—all this is riot. The Vendée is a grand Catholic riot. The sound of right in motion can be recognized, and it does not always come from the trembling of the overthrown masses ; there are mad furies and cracked

bells, and all the tocsins do not give the sound of bronze. The commotion of passions and ignorances differs from the shock of progress. Rise, if you like, but only to grow, and show me in what direction you are going, for insurrection is only possible with a forward movement. Any other uprising is bad, every violent step backwards is riot, and recoiling is an assault upon the human race. Insurrection is the outburst of the fury of truth; the paving-stones which insurrection tears up emit the spark of right, and they only leave to riot their mud. Danton rising against Louis XVI. is insurrection; Hebert against Danton is riot.

Hence it comes that if insurrection in given cases may be, as Lafayette said, the most holy of duties, riot may be the most fatal of attacks. There is also some difference in the intensity of caloric; insurrection is often a volcano, a riot often a straw fire. Revolt, as we have said, is sometimes found in the power. Polignac is a rioter, and Camille Desmoulins is a government. At times insurrection is a resurrection. The solution of everything by universal suffrage being an absolutely modern fact, and all history anterior to that fact being for four thousand years filled with violated right and the suffering of the peoples, each epoch of history brings with it the protest which is possible to it. Under the Cæsars there was no insurrection, but there was Juvenal, and the *facit indignatio* takes the place of the Gracchi. Under the Cæsars there is the Exile of Syene, and there is also the man of the "Annals." We will not refer to the immense Exile of Patmos, who also crushes the real world with a protest in the name of the ideal world, converts a vision into an enormous satire, and casts on Rome-Nineveh, Rome-Babylon, and Rome-Sodom, the flashing reflection of the Apocalypse. John on his rock is the sphynx on its pedestal; we cannot understand him, for he is a Jew, and writes in Hebrew, but the man who writes the Annals is a Latin, or, to speak more correctly, a Roman. As the Neros reign in the black manner, they must be painted in the same. Work produced by the graver alone would be pale, and so a concentrated biting prose must be poured into the lines. Despots are of some service to thinkers, for chained language is terrible language, and the writer doubles and triples his style when silence is imposed by a master on the people. There issues from this silence a certain mysterious fulness which filters and fixes itself in bronze in the thought. Compression in history produces conciseness in the historian, and the granitic solidity of certain celebrated prose is nothing but a pressure put on by the tyrant. Tyranny forces the

writer into contraction of the diameter, which is increase of strength. The Ciceronian period, scarce sufficient for Verres, would be blunted upon a Caligula. Though there is less breadth in the sentence, there is more intensity in the blow, and Tacitus thinks with a drawn-back arm. The honesty of a great heart condensed in justice and truth is annihilating.

We must observe, by the way, that Tacitus is not historically superimposed on Cæsar, and the Tiberii are reserved for him. Cæsar and Tacitus are two successive phenomena, whose meeting seems to be mysteriously prevented by Him who regulates the entrances and exits on the stage of centuries. Cæsar is great, Tacitus is great, and God spares these two grandeurs by not bringing them into collision. The judge, in striking Cæsar, might strike too hard and be unjust, and God does not wish that. The great wars of Africa and Spain, the Cilician pirates destroyed, civilization introduced into Gaul, Britain, and Germany—all this glory covers the Rubicon. There is in this a species of delicacy on the part of divine justice, hesitating to let loose on the illustrious usurper the formidable historian, saving Cæsar from the sentence of a Tacitus, and granting extenuating circumstances to genius. Assuredly despotism remains despotism, even under the despot of genius. There is corruption under illustrious tyrants, but the moral plague is more hideous still under infamous tyrants. In such reigns nothing veils the shame; and the producers of examples, Tacitus like Juvenal, buffet more usefully in the presence of this human race this ignominy, which has no reply to make. Rome smells worse under Vitellius than under Sylla; under Claudius and Domitian there is a deformity of baseness corresponding with the ugliness of the tyrant. The foulness of the slaves is the direct product of the despots; a miasma is extracted from these crouching consciences in which the master is reflected; the public power is unclean, heads are small, consciences flat, and souls vermin; this is the case under Caracalla, Commodus, and Heliogabalus, while from the Roman senate under Cæsar there only issues the guano smell peculiar to eagles' nests. Hence the apparently tardy arrival of Juvenal and Tacitus, for the demonstrator steps in at the hour for the experiment to be performed.

But Juvenal or Tacitus, like Isaiah in biblical times and Dante in the Middle Ages, is the man; riot and insurrection are the multitude, which is sometimes wrong, sometimes right. In the most general cases riot issues from a material fact, but insurrection is always a moral phenomenon. Riot is Masaniello;

insurrection is Spartacus. Insurrection is related to the mind, riot to the stomach ; Gaster is irritated, but Gaster is certainly not always in the wrong. In questions of famine, riot, the Buzançais one, for instance, has a true, pathetic, and just starting point, and yet it remains a riot. Why ? because, though right in the abstract, it is wrong in form. Ferocious though legitimate, violent though strong, it has marched hap-hazard, crushing things in its passage like a blind elephant ; it has left behind it the corpses of old men, women, and children, and has shed, without knowing why, the blood of the unoffending and the innocent. Feeding the people is a good end, but massacre is a bad means.

All armed protests, even the most legitimate, even August 10th and July 14th, set out with the same trouble, and before right is disengaged there are tumult and scenes. At the outset an insurrection is a riot, in the same way as the river is a torrent, and generally pours itself into that ocean, Revolution. Sometimes, however, insurrection, which has come from those lofty mountains which command the moral horizon, justice, wisdom, reason, and right, and is composed of the purest snow of the ideal, after a long fall from rock to rock, after reflecting the sky in its transparency, and being swollen by a hundred confluent in its majestic course, suddenly loses itself in some bourgeois bog, as the Rhine does in the marshes. All this belongs to the past, and the future will be different, for universal suffrage has this admirable thing about it, that it dissolves riot in its origin, and, by giving insurrection a vote, deprives it of the weapon. The disappearance of war, street wars as well as frontier wars, such is the inevitable progress, and, whatever to-day may be, peace is the to-morrow. However, the bourgeois, properly so called, makes but a slight distinction between insurrection and riot. To him everything is sedition, pure and simple rebellion, the revolt of the dog against the master, an attempt to bite, which must be punished with the chain and the kennel, a barking, until the day when the dog's head, suddenly enlarged, stands out vaguely in the shadow with a lion's face. Then the bourgeois shouts, "Long live the people!"

This explanation given, how does the movement of 1832 stand to history ? is it a riot or an insurrection ? it is an insurrection. It may happen that in the course of our narrative of a formidable event we may use the word "riot," but only to qualify surface facts, and while still maintaining the distinction between the form riot and the basis insurrection. The movement of 1832 had in its rapid explosion and mournful extinction so much grandeur that even those who only see a riot in

it speak of it respectfully. To them it is like a remnant of 1830, for, as they say, excited imaginations cannot be calmed in a day, and a revolution does not stop short with a precipice, but has necessarily a few undulations before it returns to a state of peace, like a mountain in redescending to the plain. This pathetic crisis of contemporary history, which the memory of the Parisians calls the "time of the riots," is assuredly a characteristic hour among the stormy hours of this age. One last word before we return to our story.

The facts which we are going to record belong to that dramatic and living reality which the historian sometimes neglects through want of time and space, but they contain, we insist upon it, life, palpitation, and human quivering. Small details, as we think we have said, are, so to speak, the foliage of great events, and are lost in the distance of history. The period called the riots abounds in details of this nature, and the judicial inquiries, through other than historic reasons, have not revealed everything, or perhaps studied it. We are, therefore, going to bring into light among the peculiarities known and published, things which are not known and facts over which the forgetfulness of some and the death of others have passed. Most of the actors in these gigantic scenes have disappeared. On the next day they held their tongues, but we may say that we saw what we are about to narrate. We will change a few names, for history recounts and does not denounce, but we will depict true things. The nature of our book will only allow us to display one side and one episode, assuredly the least known, of the days of June 5 and 6, 1832, but we will do so in such a way that the reader will be enabled to catch a glimpse of the real face of this frightful public adventure behind the dark veil which we are about to lift.

CHAPTER XIII.

A BURIAL GIVES OPPORTUNITY FOR A REVIVAL.

In the spring of 1832, although for three months cholera had chilled minds and cast over their agitation a species of dull calm, Paris had been for a long time ready for a commotion. As we have said, the great city resembles a piece of artillery when it is loaded,—a spark need only fall and the gun goes off.

In June, 1832, the spark was the death of General Lamarque. Lamarque was a man of renown and of action, and had displayed in succession, under the Empire and the Restoration, the two braveries necessary for the two epochs, the bravery of the battle-field and the bravery of the oratorical tribune. He was eloquent as he had been valiant, and a sword was felt in his words ; like Foy, his predecessor, after holding the command erect, he held liberty erect ; he sat between the Left and the extreme Left, beloved by the people because he accepted the chances of the future, and beloved by the mob because he had served the Emperor well. He was with Gérard and Drouet one of Napoleon's marshals *in petto*, and the hiatus of 1815 affected him like a personal insult. He hated Wellington with a direct hatred, which pleased the multitude, and for the last seventeen years, scarcely paying attention to intermediate events, he had majestically nursed his grief for Waterloo. In his dying hour he pressed to his heart a sword which the officers of the hundred days had given him, and while Napoleon died uttering the word *army*, Lamarque died pronouncing the word *country*. His death, which was expected, was feared by the people as a loss, and by the Government as an opportunity. This death was a mourning, and, like everything which is bitter, mourning may turn into revolt. This really happened on the previous evening, and on the morning of June 5th, the day fixed for the interment of Lamarque, the Faubourg St Antoine, close to which the procession would pass, assumed a formidable aspect. This tumultuous net-work of streets was filled with rumours, and people armed themselves as they could. Carpenters carried off the bolts of their shop "to break in doors with ;" one of them made a dagger of a stocking-weaver's hook, by breaking off the hook and sharpening the stump. Another in his fever "to attack" slept for three nights in his clothes. A carpenter of the name of Lombier met a mate, who asked him, "Where are you going ?" "Why, I have no weapon, and so I am going to my shop to fetch my compasses." "What to do ?" "I don't know," Lombier said. A porter of the name of Jacqueline arrested any workman who happened to pass, and said, "Come with me." He paid for a pint of wine, and asked, "Have you work ?" "No." "Go to Filspierre's, between the Montreuil and Charonne barrières, and you will find work." At Filspierre's cartridges and arms were distributed. Some well-known chiefs went the rounds, that is to say, ran from one to the other to collect their followers. At Barthelemy's, near the Barrière du Trone, and at Capel's, the Petit Chapeau, the drinkers accosted each other with a serious air, and could be heard saying,

"Where is your pistol?" "Under my blouse; and yours?" "Under my shirt." In the Rue Traversiere, in front of Roland's workshop, and in the yard of the Burnt House, before the workshop of Bernier the tool-maker, groups stood whispering. The most ardent among them was a certain Mavot, who never stopped longer than a week at a shop, for his masters sent him away, "as they were obliged to quarrel with him every day." Mavot was killed the next day on the barricade of the Rue Menilmontant. Pretot, who was also destined to die in the struggle, seconded Mavot, and replied to the question "What is your object?" "Insurrection." Workmen assembled at the corner of the Rue de Berry, awaiting a man of the name of Lemarin, revolutionary agent for the Faubourg St Marceau, and pass-words were exchanged almost publicly.

On June 5, then, a day of sunshine and shower, the funeral procession of General Lamarque passed through Paris with the official military pomp, somewhat increased by precautions. Two battalions with covered drums and trailing muskets, ten thousand of the National Guard with their sabres at their side, and the batteries of the artillery of the National Guard escorted the coffin, and the hearse was drawn by young men. The officers of the Invalides followed immediately after, bearing laurel branches, and then came a countless, agitated, and strange multitude, the sectionists of the friends of the people, the school of law, the school of medicine, refugees of all nations, Spanish, Italian, German, Polish flags, horizontal tri-colour flags, every banner possible, children waving green branches, stone-cutters and carpenters out of work at this very time, and printers easy to recognize by their paper caps, marching two and two, three and three, uttering cries, nearly all shaking sticks, and some sabres, without order, but with one soul, at one moment a mob, at another a column. Squads selected their chiefs, and a man armed with a brace of pistols, which were perfectly visible, seemed to pass others in review, whose files made way for him. On the side-walks of the boulevards, on the branches of the trees, in the balconies, at the windows and on the roofs, there was a dense throng of men, women, and children, whose eyes were full of anxiety. An armed crowd passed, and a startled crowd looked at it; on its side Government was observing, with its hand on the sword-hilt. Four squadrons of carbineers, mounted, and with their trumpeters at the head, with their cartouche boxes full, and their musquetoons loaded, might be seen on the Place Louis XV., in the Pays Latin, and at the Jardin des Plantes; the municipal guard

were echeloned from street to street; at the Halle-aux-Vins was a squadron of dragoons, at the Grève one half of the 12th Light Infantry, while the other half was at the Bastille; the 6th Dragoons were at the Celestins, and the court of the Louvre was crammed with artillery; all the rest of the troops were confined to barracks, without counting the regiments in the environs of Paris. The alarmed authorities held suspended over the threatening multitude twenty-four thousand soldiers in the city, and thirty thousand in the suburbs.

Various rumours circulated in the procession, legitimist intrigues were talked about, and they spoke about the Duke of Reichstadt, whom God was marking for death at the very moment when the crowd designated him for Emperor. A person who was never discovered announced that at appointed hours two overseers, gained over, would open to the people the gates of a small arm-factory. An enthusiasm blended with despondency was visible in the uncovered heads of most of the persons present, and here and there too in this multitude, suffering from so many violent but noble emotions, might be seen criminal faces and ignoble lips, that muttered, "Let us plunder." There are some agitations which stir up the bottom of the marsh and bring clouds of mud to the surface of the water; this is a phenomenon familiar to a well-constituted police force. The procession proceeded with feverish slowness from the house of death along the boulevards to the Bastille. It rained at intervals, but the rain produced no effect on this crowd. Several incidents, such as the coffin carried thrice round the Vendôme column, stones thrown at the Duc de Fitz-james, who was noticed in a balcony with his hat on his head, the Gallic cock torn from a popular flag and dragged in the mud, a policeman wounded by a sword-thrust at the Porte St Martin, an officer of the 12th Light Infantry saying aloud, "I am a republican," the Polytechnic school coming up, after forcing the gates, and the cries of "Long live the Polytechnic school!" "Long live the Republic!" marked the passage of the procession. At the Bastille long formidable files of spectators, coming down from the Faubourg St Antoine, effected their junction with the procession, and a certain terrible ebullition began to agitate the crowd. A man was heard saying to another, "You see that fellow with the red beard; he will say when it is time to fire." It seems that this red beard reappeared with the same functions in a later riot, the Quenisset affair.

The hearse passed the Bastille, followed the canal, crossed the small bridge, and reached the esplanade of the bridge of Austerlitz, where it halted. At this moment a bird's-eye view

of the crowd would have offered the appearance of a comet, whose head was on the esplanade, and whose tail was prolonged upon the boulevard as far as the Porte St Martin. A circle was formed round the hearse, and the vast crowd was hushed. Lafayette spoke, and bade farewell to Lamarque : it was a touching and august moment,—all heads were uncovered, and all hearts beat. All at once a man on horseback, dressed in black, appeared in the middle of the group with a red flag, though others say with a pike surmounted by a red cap. Lafayette turned his head away, and Excelmans left the procession. This red flag aroused a storm and disappeared in it : from the boulevard Bourdon to the bridge of Austerlitz one of those clamours which resemble billows stirred up the multitude, and two prodigious cries were raised, “*Lamarque at the Pantheon!*”—“*Lafayette at the Hotel de Ville!*” Young men, amid the acclamations of the crowd, began dragging Lamarque in the hearse over the bridge of Austerlitz, and Lafayette in a hackney coach along the Quai Morland. In the crowd that surrounded and applauded Lafayette people noticed and pointed out to each other a German of the name of Ludwig Snyder, who has since died a centenarian, who also went through the campaign of 1776, and had fought at Trenton under Washington, and under Lafayette at Brandywine.

The municipal cavalry galloped along the left bank to stop the passage of the bridge, while on the right the dragoons came out of the Celestins and deployed along the Quai Morland. The people who were drawing Lafayette suddenly perceived them at a turning of the quay, and cried, “The Dragoons!” The troops advanced at a walk, silently, with their pistols in the holsters, sabres undrawn, and musquetoons slung with an air of gloomy expectation. Two hundred yards from the little bridge they halted, the coach in which Lafayette was went up to them, they opened their ranks to let it pass, and then closed up again. At this moment the dragoons and the crowd came in contact, and women fled in terror. What took place in this fatal minute? no one could say, for it is the dark moment when two clouds clash together. Some state that a bugle-call sounding the charge was heard on the side of the Arsenal, others that a dragoon was stabbed with a knife by a lad. The truth is, that three shots were suddenly fired, one killing Major Cholut, the second an old deaf woman who was closing her window in the Rue Contrescarpe, while the third grazed an officer’s shoulder. A woman cried, “They have begun too soon!” and all at once a squadron of dragoons was seen

galloping up on the opposite side with drawn sabres, and sweeping everything before it.

At such a moment the last word is said, the tempest is unchained, stones shower, the fusillade bursts forth : many rush to the water's edge and cross the small arm of the Seine, which is now filled up: the timber-yards on isle Louviers, that ready-made citadel, bristle with combatants, stakes are pulled up, pistols are fired, a barricade is commenced, the young men driven back, pass over the bridge of Austerlitz with the hearse at the double, and charge the municipal guard: the carbineers gallop up, the dragoons sabre, the crowd disperses in all directions, a rumour of war flies to the four corners of Paris : men cry "To arms" and run, overthrow, fly, and resist. Passion spreads the riot as the wind does fire.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE EBULLITIONS OF OTHER DAYS.

NOTHING is more extraordinary than the commencement of a riot, for everything breaks out everywhere at once. Was it foreseen? yes. Was it prepared? no. Where does it issue from? from the pavement. Where does it fall from? the clouds. At one spot the insurrection has the character of a plot, at another of an improvisation. The first comer grasps a current of the mob and leads it whither he pleases. It is a beginning full of horror, with which a sort of formidable gaiety is mingled. First there is a clamour; shops are closed, and the goods disappear from the tradesmen's windows; then dropping shots are heard; people fly; gate-ways are assailed with the butts of muskets, and servant-maids may be heard laughing in the yards of the houses and saying, *There's going to be a row.*

A quarter of an hour had not elapsed: this is what was going on simultaneously at twenty different points of Paris. In the Rue St Croix de la Bretonnerie, twenty young men, with beards and long hair, entered a wine-shop and came out a moment after carrying a horizontal tri-colour flag covered with crape, and having at their head three men armed, one with a sabre, the second with a gun, and the third with a

pike. In the Rue des Nonaindières, a well-dressed bourgeois, who had a large stomach, a sonorous voice, bald head, lofty forehead, black beard, and one of those rough moustaches which cannot be kept from bristling, publicly offered cartridges to passers-by. In the Rue St Pierre Montmartre bare-armed men carried about a black flag, on which were read these words, in white letters : *Republic or death.* In the Rue des Jeûneurs, Rue du Cadran, Rue Montorgueil, and Rue Mandar, groups appeared waving flags, on which could be distinguished the word *section* in gold letters with a number. One of these flags was red and blue, with an imperceptible parting line of white. A small arm-factory and the gunsmiths' shops were plundered on the boulevard St Martin, and in a few minutes the thousand hands of the mob seized and carried off two hundred and thirty guns, nearly all double-barrelled, sixty-four sabres, and eighty-three pistols. In order to arm as many persons as possible, one took the musket, the other the bayonet. Opposite the Quai de la Grève young men armed with muskets stationed themselves in the rooms of some ladies in order to fire ; one of them had a wheel-lock gun. They rang, went in and began making cartridges, and one of the ladies said afterwards, "I did not know what cartridges were till my husband told me." A crowd broke into a curiosity-shop on the Rue des Vieilles-Haudriettes, and took from it yataghans and Turkish weapons. The corpse of a mason killed by a bullet lay in the Rue de la Perle. And then, on the right bank and the left bank, on the quays, on the boulevards, in the Quartier Latin, and on the Quartier of the Halles, panting men, workmen, students, and sectionists, read proclamations, shouted "To arms!" broke the lanterns, unharnessed vehicles, tore up the pavement, broke in the doors of houses, uprooted trees, searched cellars, rolled up barrels, heaped up paving-stones, furniture, and planks, and formed barricades.

Citizens were forced to lend a hand ; the rioters went to the wives, compelled them to surrender the sabre and musket of their absent husbands, and then wrote on the door in chalk, *The arms are given up.* Some signed with their own names receipts for musket and sabre, and said, *Send for them to-morrow at the Mayoralty.* Isolated sentries and National Guards proceeding to their gathering place were disarmed in the streets. Epaulettes were torn from the officers, and in the Rue du Cimitière St Nicholas, an officer of the National Guard, pursued by a party armed with sticks and forks, found refuge with great difficulty in a house, where he was compelled to remain till night, and then went away in disguise. In the Quartier St Jacques the students came out of their lodging-houses in swarms, and went

up the Rue Ste Hyacinthe to the Café du Progrès, or down to the Café des Sept Billiards in the Rue des Mathurins, there the young men stood on benches and distributed arms; and the timber-yard in the Rue Transnonain was pillaged to make barricades. Only at one spot did the inhabitants offer resistance, at the corner of the Rue St Avoye and Simon-le-Franc, where they themselves destroyed the barricade. Only at one point too did the insurgents give way; they abandoned a barricade begun in the Rue du Temple, after firing at a detachment of the National Guard, and fled along the Rue de la Corderie. The detachment picked up on the barricade a red flag, a packet of cartridges, and three hundred pistol bullets; the National Guards tore up the flag, and carried off the strips on the point of their bayonets. All this which we are describing here slowly and successively, was going on simultaneously at all parts of the city, in the midst of a vast tumult, like a number of lightning flashes in a single peal of thunder.

In less than an hour twenty-seven barricades issued from the ground in the single quarter of the Halles; in the centre was that famous house No. 50, which was the fortress of Jeanne and her hundred-and-six companions, and which, flanked on one side by a barricade at St Merry, and on the other by a barricade in the Rue Maubuée, commanded the three streets, des Arcis, St Martin, and Aubry le Boucher, the last of which it faced. This is without counting innumerable barricades in twenty other districts of Paris, as the Marais and the Montagne Ste Geneviève; one in the Rue Menilmontant, in which a gate could be seen torn off its hinges; and another near the little bridge of the Hotel Dieu, made of an overthrown vehicle. Three hundred yards from the Prefecture of Police, at the barricade in the Rue des Ménétrirs, a well-dressed man distributed money to the artizans; at the barricade in the Rue Greneta a horseman rode up and handed to the man who seemed to be the chief of the barricade a roll, which looked like money. "Here," he said, "is something to pay the expenses,—the wine, &c." A light-haired young man, without a cravat, went from one barricade to another, carrying the pass-words, and another, with drawn sabre and a blue forage-cap on his head, stationed sentries. In the interior, within the barricades, the wine-shops and cabarets were converted into guard-rooms, and the riot was managed in accordance with the most skilful military tactics. The narrow, uneven winding streets, full of corners and turnings, were admirably selected,—the vicinity of the Halles more especially, a net-work of streets more tangled than a forest. The Society of the Friends of the People had, it was

said, taken the direction of the insurrection in the St Avoye district, and a plan of Paris was found on the body of a man killed in the Rue du Ponceau.

What had really assumed the direction of the insurrection was a sort of unknown impetuosity that was in the atmosphere. The insurrection had suddenly built barricades with one hand, and with the other seized nearly all the garrison posts. In less than three hours the insurgents, like a powder-train fired, had seized and occupied on the right bank the Arsenal, the Popincourt arms-factory, the Galilote, the Château d'Eau, and all the streets near the Halles ; on the left bank the Veterans' barracks, Ste Pelagie, the Place Maubert, the powder-manufactory of the Two-mills, and all the barrières. At five in the evening they were masters of the Bastille, the Lingerie, and the Blanc-Manteaux ; while their scouts were close to the Place de Victoires and menaced the Bank, the barracks of the Petits-Pères and the Post-office. One-third of Paris was in the hands of the revolt. On all points the struggle had begun on a gigantic scale, and the result of the disarmaments, the domiciliary visits, and the attack on the gunsmiths' shops, was that the fight which had begun with stone-throwing was continued with musket-shots.

About six in the evening the Passage du Saumon became the battle-field ; the rioters were at one end and the troops at the other, and they fired from one gate at the other. An observer, a dreamer, the author of this book, who had gone to have a near look at the volcano, found himself caught between two fires in the passage, and had nothing to protect him from the bullets but the projecting semi-columns which used to separate the shops ; he was nearly half an hour in this delicate position. In the mean while the tattoo was beaten, the National Guards hurriedly dressed and armed themselves, the legions issued from the Mayoralty, and the regiments from the barracks. Opposite Anchor Passage a drummer was stabbed ; another was attacked in the Rue de Cygne by thirty young men, who ripped up his drum and took his sabre, while a third was killed in the Rue Grenier St Lazare. In the Rue Michel le Comte three officers fell dead one after the other, and several municipal guards, wounded in the Rue des Lombards, recoiled. In front of the Cour Batave, a detachment of National Guards found a red flag, bearing this inscription, "*Republican Revolution, No. 127.*" Was it really a revolution ? The insurrection had made of the heart of Paris a sort of inextricable, tortuous, and colossal citadel ; there was the nucleus, there the question would be solved ; all the rest was merely skirmishing. The

proof that all would be decided there lay in the fact that fighting had not yet begun there.

In some regiments the troops were uncertain, which added to the startling obscurity of the crisis ; and they remembered the popular ovation which, in July, 1830, greeted the neutrality of the 53rd line. Two intrepid men, tried by the great wars, Marshal de Lobau and General Bugeaud, commanded — Bugeaud under Lobau. Enormous patrols, composed of battalions of the line enclosed in entire companies of the National Guard, and preceded by the Police Commissary in his scarf, went to reconnoitre the insurgent streets. On their side, the insurgents posted vedettes at the corner of the streets, and audaciously sent patrols beyond the barricades. Both sides were observing each other ; the Government, with an army in its hand, hesitated, night was setting in, and the tocsin of St Mary was beginning to be heard. Marshal Soult, the Minister of War at that day, who had seen Austerlitz, looked at all this with a gloomy air. These old sailors, habituated to correct manœuvres, and having no other resource and guide but tactics, the compass of battles, are completely thrown out when in the presence of that immense foam which is called the public anger. The wind of revolutions is not favourable for sailing. The National Guards of the suburbs ran up hastily and disorderly ; a battalion of the 12th Light Infantry came at the double from St Denis ; the 14th line arrived from Courbevoie, the batteries of the military school had taken up position at the Carrousel, and guns were brought in from Vincennes.

At the Tuilleries there was not an additional sentry posted, and Louis Philippe was full of serenity.

CHAPTER XV.

ORIGINALITY OF PARIS.

DURING the two past years Paris, as we said, had seen more than one insurrection. With the exception of the insurgent districts, as a rule, nothing is more strangely calm than the physiognomy of Paris during a riot. Paris very soon grows accustomed to everything—it is only a riot—and Paris has so much to do that it does not put itself out of the way for such a trifle. These colossal cities alone can offer such spectacles. These immense enclosures alone can contain si-

multaneously civil war and a strange tranquillity. Usually, when the insurrection begins, when the drum, the tattoo, and the assembly are heard, the shopkeeper confines himself to saying,—

“Ah, there seems to be a row in the Rue St Martin.”

Or,—

“The Faubourg St Antoine.”

And he often adds, negligently,—

“Somewhere over that way.”

At a later date, when the heart-rending and mournful sound of musketry and platoon fire can be distinguished, the shopkeeper says,—

“Bless me, it is growing hot.”

A moment later, if the riot approaches and spreads, he precipitately closes his shop and puts on his uniform, that is to say, places his wares in safety, and risks his person. Men shoot themselves on a square, in a passage, or a blind alley; barricades are taken, lost, and retaken, blood flows, the grape-shot pockmark the fronts of the houses, bullets kill people on their beds, and corpses encumber the pavement. A few yards off you hear the click of the billiard-balls in the coffee-houses. The theatres open their doors and play farces; and gossips talk and laugh two yards from these streets full of war. Hackney coaches roll along, and their fares are going to dine out, sometimes in the very district where the fighting is. In 1831 a fusillade was interrupted in order to let a wedding pass. During the insurrection of May 12, 1839, in the Rue St Martin, a little old infirm man, dragging a hand-truck surmounted by a tricolour-rag, and carrying bottles full of some fluid, came and went from the barricade to the troops, and from the troops to the barricade, impartially offering glasses of coco, first to the Government and then to anarchy. Nothing can be stranger, and this is the peculiar character of Parisian riots, which is not found in any other capital, as two things are required for it—the grandeur of Paris and its gaiety, the city of Voltaire and of Napoleon. This time, however, in the insurrection of June 5, 1832, the great city felt something which was perhaps stronger than itself, and was frightened. Everywhere, in the most remote and disinterested districts, doors, windows, and shutters were closed in broad daylight. The courageous armed, the cowardly hid themselves, and the careless and busy passengers disappeared. Many streets were as empty as at four in the morning. Alarming details were hawked about, and fatal news spread—that *they* were masters of the

Bank—that at the cloisters of St Merry alone, they were six hundred, intrenched with loopholes in a church—that the line was not sure—that Armand Carrel had been to see Marshal Clausel, and the latter said to him, *Have a regiment first*—that Lafayette, though ill, had said to them, *I am with you and will follow you wherever there is room for a chair*—that people must be on their guard, for at night burglars would plunder isolated houses in the deserted corners of Paris (in this could be recognized the imagination of the police, that Anne Ratcliffe blended with the Government)—that a battery had been established in the Rue Aubry-le-Boucher—that Lobau and Bugeaud were agreed, and that at midnight, or at day-break at the latest, four columns would march together on the centre of the revolt, the first coming from the Bastille, the second from the Porte St Martin, the third from the Grève, and the fourth from the Halles—that, perhaps too, the troops would evacuate Paris, and retire on the Champ de Mars—that no one knew what would happen, but this time it was certainly very serious. People were alarmed too by the hesitation of Marshal Soult; why did he not attack at once? It is certain that he was greatly absorbed, and the old lion seemed to scent an unknown monster in the darkness.

Night came, and the theatres were not opened, the patrols went their rounds with an air of irritation, passers-by were searched, and suspected persons arrested. At nine o'clock there were more than eight hundred persons taken up, and the Prefecture of Police, the Conciergerie, and la Force were crowded. At the Conciergerie, especially, the long vault called the Rue de Paris, was strewn with trusses of straw, on which lay a pile of prisoners, whom Lagrange, the man of Lyons, valiantly harangued. All this straw, moved by all these men, produced the sound of a shower. Elsewhere the prisoners slept in the open air on lawns; there was anxiety everywhere, and a certain trembling, not at all usual to Paris. People barricaded themselves in the houses; wives and mothers were alarmed, and nothing else but this was heard, *Oh heavens! he has not come in!* Only the rolling of a few vehicles could be heard in the distance, and people listened in the doorways to the noises, cries, tumults, and dull, indistinct sounds, of which they said, *That is the cavalry, or It is the galloping of tumbrils*; to the bugles, the drums, the firing, and before all to the lamentable tocsin of St Merry. They waited for the first artillery round, and men rose at the corner of the streets and disappeared, after shouting “*Go in.*” And they hastened to bolt

their doors, saying, "How will it all end?" From moment to moment, as the night became darker, Paris seemed to be more lugubriously coloured by the formidable flashes of the revolt.

CHAPTER XVI.

GAVROCHE ON THE MARCH.

AT the moment when the insurrection, breaking out through the collision between the people and the troops in front of the arsenal, produced a retrograde movement in the multitude that followed the hearse, and which pressed with the whole length of the boulevards upon the head of the procession, there was a frightful reflux. The ranks were broken, and all ran or escaped, some with cries of attack, others with the pallor of flight. The great stream which covered the boulevards divided in a second, overflowed on the right and left, and spread in torrents over two hundred streets at once, as if a dyke had burst. At this moment a ragged lad who was coming down the Rue Menilmontant, holding in his hand a branch of flowering laburnum which he had picked on the heights of Belleville, noticed in the shop of a seller of curiosities an old holster pistol. He threw his branch on the pavement, and cried,—

"Mother What's-your-name, I'll borrow your machine."

And he ran off with the pistol. Two minutes after, a crowd of frightened cits flying through the Rue Basse met the lad, who was brandishing his pistol and singing,—

La nuit on ne voit rien,
Le jour on voit très bien,
D'un écrit apocryphe
Le bourgeois s'ébouriffe
Pratiquez la vertu,
Tutu chapeau pointu !

It was little Gavroche going to the wars; on the boulevard he noticed that his pistol had no hammer. Who was the composer of this couplet which served to punctuate his march, and all the other songs which he was fond of singing when he had a chance? who knows? himself, perhaps. Be-

sides, Gavroche was acquainted with all the popular tunes in circulation, and mingled with them his own chirping, and, as a young vagabond, he made a *pot-pourri* of the voices of nature and the voices of Paris. He combined the repertory of the birds with that of the workshops, and he was acquainted with artists' grinders, a tribe contiguous to his own. He had been for three months, it appears, apprenticed to a painter, and had one day delivered a message for M. Baour Lormian, one of the forty ; Gavroche was a lettered gamin. Gavroche did not suspect, however, that on that wretched rainy night when he offered the hospitality of his elephant to the two boys he was performing the offices of Providence to his two brothers. His brothers in the evening, his father in the morning,—such had been his night. On leaving the Rue des Ballets at dawn, he hurried back to the elephant, artistically extracted the two boys, shared with them the sort of breakfast which he had invented, and then went away, confiding them to that good mother, the street, who had almost brought himself up. On leaving them he gave them the meeting on the same spot at night and left them this speech as farewell,—“I am breaking a cane, *alias* my name’s walker, or, as they say at Court, I am going to hook it. My brats, if you do not find papa and mamma, come here again to-night. I will give you your supper and put you to bed.” The two lads, picked up by some policeman and placed at the dépôt, or stolen by some mountebank, or simply lost in that Chinese puzzle, Paris, did not return. The substrata of the existing social world are full of such lost traces. Gavroche had not seen them again, and ten or twelve weeks had elapsed since that night. More than once he had scratched his head and asked himself, “Where the deuce are my two children ?”

He reached the Rue du Pont aux Choux, and noticed that there was only one shop still open in that street, and it was worthy of reflection that it was a confectioner’s. It was a providential opportunity to eat one more apple-puff before entering the unknown. Gavroche stopped, felt in his pockets, turned them inside out, found nothing, not even a sou, and began shouting, “Help !” It is hard to go without the last cake, but for all that Gavroche went on his way. Two minutes after he was in the Rue St Louis, and on crossing the Rue du Parc Royal he felt the necessity of compensating himself for the impossible apple-puff, and gave himself the immense treat of tearing down in open daylight the play-bills. A little further on, seeing a party of stout

gentry, who appeared to him to be retired from business, he shrugged his shoulders and spat out this mouthful of philosophic bile,—

“ How fat annuitants are ! they wallow in good dinners. Ask them what they do with their money, and they don’t know. They eat it, eat their belly-full.”

Holding a pistol without a cock in the streets is such a public function, that Gavroche felt his humour increase at every step. He cried between the scraps of the *Marseillaise* which he sang,—

“ All goes well. I suffer considerably in my left paw. I have broken my rheumatism, but I am happy, citizens. The bourgeois have only to hold firm, and I am going to sing them some subversive couplets. What are the police ? dogs ; after all,” he added, thinking of the hammer* missing from his pistol, “ we must not treat all dogs disrespectfully. I have just come from the boulevard, my friends, where it’s getting warm, and the soup is simmering ; it is time to skim the pot. Forward, my men, and let an impure blood inundate the furrows ! I give my days for my country. I shall not see my concubine again, it’s all over. Well, no matter ! long live joy ! let us fight, crebleu, for I have had enough of despotism ! ”

At this moment the horse of a lancer, in the National Guard, who was passing, fell. Gavroche laid his pistol on the pavement, helped the man up, and then helped to raise the horse, after which he picked up his pistol and went his way again. In the Rue de Thorigny all was peace and silence ; and this apathy, peculiar to the Marais, contrasted with the vast surrounding turmoil. Four gossips were conversing on the step of a door ; Scotland has trios of witches, but Paris has quartettes of gossips, and the “ thou shalt be king ” would be as lugubriously cast at Bonaparte at the Bandoyer crossway, as to Macbeth on the Highland heath—it would be much the same croak. The gossips in the Rue Thorigny only troubled themselves about their own affairs ; they were three portresses, and a rag-picker with her dorser and her hook. They seemed to be standing all four at the four corners of old age, which are decay, decrepitude, ruin, and sorrow. The rag-picker was humble, for in this open-air world the rag-picker bows, and the portress protects. The things thrown into the street are fat and lean, according to the fancy of the person who makes the pile, and there may be kindness in the broom. This rag-picker was grateful, and

* An untranslateable pun, as the hammer of a pistol is called a dog in France.

she smiled, what a smile! at the three porteresses. They were making remarks like the following,—

“ So your cat is as ill-tempered as ever? ”

“ Well, good gracious, you know that cats are naturally the enemy of dogs. It’s the dogs that complain.”

“ And people too.”

“ And yet cats’ fleas do not run after people.”

“ Dogs are really dangerous. I remember one year when there were so many dogs that they were obliged to put it in the papers. It was at that time when there were large sheep at the Tuilleries to drag the little carriage of the King of Rome. Do you remember the King of Rome? ”

“ I was very fond of the Duc de Bordeaux.”

“ Well, I know Louis XVII., and I like him better.”

“ How dear meat is, Mame Patagon! ”

“ Oh, don’t talk about it, butcher’s meat is a horror, a horrible horror. It is only possible to buy sticking pieces now.”

Here the rag-picker interposed,—

“ Ladies, trade does not go on well at all, and the rubbish is abominable. People do not throw away anything now, but eat it all.”

“ There are poorer folk than you, Vargoulême.”

“ Ah, that’s true,” the rag-picker replied deferentially, “ for I have a profession.”

There was a pause, and the rag-picker yielding to that need of display which is at the bottom of the human heart, added,—

“ When I go home in the morning I empty out my basket and sort the articles; that makes piles in my room. I put the rags in a box, the cabbage stalks in a tub, the pieces of linen in my cupboard, the woollen rags in my chest of drawers, old papers on the corner of the window, things good to eat in my porringer, pieces of glass in the fire-place, old shoes behind the door, and bones under my bed.”

Gavroche had stopped, and was listening.

“ Aged dames,” he said, “ what right have you to talk politics? ”

A broadside, composed of a quadruple yell, assailed him.

“ There’s another of the villains.”

“ What’s that he has in his hand? a pistol? ”

“ Just think, that rogue of a boy! ”

“ They are never quiet unless when they are overthrowing the authorities.”

Gavroche disdainfully limited his reprisals to lifting the tip of his nose with his thumb, and opening his hand to the full extent. The rag-picker exclaimed,—

"The barefooted scamp!"

The one who answered to the name of Mame Patagon struck her hands together with scandal.

"There are going to be misfortunes, that's safe. The young fellow with the beard round the corner, I used to see him pass every morning with a girl in a pink bonnet on his arm; but this morning I saw him pass, and he was giving his arm to a gun. Mame Bacheux says there was a revolution last week at, at, at, at,—where do the calves come from?—at Pontoise. And then, just look at this atrocious young villain's pistol. It seems that the Celestins are full of cannon. What would you have the Government do with these vagabonds who can only invent ways to upset the world, after we were beginning to get over all the misfortunes which fell, good gracious! on that poor Queen whom I saw pass in a cart! and all this will raise the price of snuff. It is infamous, and I will certainly go and see you guillotined, malefactor."

"You snuffle, my aged friend," said Gavroche, "blow your promontory."

And he passed on. When he was in the Rue Pavée his thoughts reverted to the rag-picker, and he had this soliloquy,—

"You are wrong to insult the revolutionists, Mother Corner-post. This pistol is on your behalf, and it is for you to have in your baskets more things good to eat."

All at once he heard a noise behind; it was the porteress Patagon, who had followed him, and now shook her fist at him, crying,—

"You are only a bastard."

"At that I scoff with all my heart," said Gavroche.

A little later he passed the Hotel Lamoignon, where he burst into this appeal,—

"Let us haste to the battle."

And he was attacked by a fit of melancholy; he regarded his pistol reproachfully, and said to it,—

"I am going off, but you will not go off."

One dog may distract another;* a very thin whelp passed, and Gavroche felt pity for it.

"My poor little creature," he said to it, "you must have swallowed a barrel, as you show all the hoops."

Then he proceeded toward the Orme St Gervais. The worthy barber who had turned out the two children for whom Gavroche had opened the elephant's paternal intestines, was at this moment in his shop, engaged in shaving an old legionary who had served under the Empire. The barber had naturally

* Another allusion to the hammer (*chien*) of the pistol.

spoken to the veteran about the riot, then about General Lamarque, and from Lamarque they had come to the Emperor. Hence arose a conversation between the barber and the soldier which Prudhomme, had he been present, would have enriched with arabesques, and entitled, "A dialogue between a razor and a sabre."

"How did the Emperor ride, sir?" the barber asked.

"Badly. He did not know how to fall off, and so he never fell off."

"Had he fine horses? he must have had fine horses!"

"On the day when he gave me the cross I noticed his beast. It was a white mare. It had its ears very far apart, a deep saddle, a fine head, marked with a black star, a very long neck, prominent knees, projecting flanks, oblique shoulders, and a strong crupper. It was a little above fifteen hands high."

"A fine horse," said the barber.

"It was his Majesty's animal."

The barber felt that after this remark a little silence was befitting; then he went on,—

"The Emperor was only wounded once, I believe, sir?"

The old soldier replied, with the calm and sovereign accent of the man who has felt wounds,—

"In the heel, at Ratisbon. I never saw him so well dressed as on that day. He was as clean as a half-penny."

"And you, sir, I suppose, have received sword-wounds?"

"I," said the soldier, "oh, a mere flea-bite. I received two sabre-cuts on my neck at Marengo, I got a bullet in my right arm at Jena, another in the left hip at Jena; at Friedland a bayonet-thrust—there; at the Muskowa seven or eight lance prods, never mind where; at Lützen, a piece of shell carried off a finger, and—oh yes! at Waterloo a bullet from a case-shot in my thigh. That's all."

"How glorious it is," the barber exclaimed, with a Pindaric accent, "to die on the battle-field! on my word of honour, sooner than die on a bed of disease, slowly, a bit every day, with drugs, cataplasms, clysters, and medicine, I would sooner have a cannon-ball in my stomach!"

"And you're right," said the soldier. He had scarce ended ere a frightful noise shook the shop; a great pane of glass was suddenly smashed, and the barber turned livid.

"Good Lord," he cried, "it is one."

"What?"

"A cannon-ball."

"Here it is."

And he picked up something which was rolling on the

ground—it was a pebble. The barber ran to his broken pane, and saw Gavroche flying at full speed towards the Marché St Jean. On passing the barber's shop Gavroche, who had the two lads at his heart, could not resist the desire of wishing him good evening, and threw a stone through his window.

"Just look," the barber yelled, who had become blue instead of livid, "he does harm for harm's sake. What had I done to that villain?"

CHAPTER XVII.

THE OLD MAN.

ON reaching the market, the post at which had been disarmed already, Gavroche effected his junction with a band led by Enjolras, Courfeyrac, Combeferre, and Feuilly. They were all more or less armed, and Bahorel and Prouvaire had joined them, and swelled the group. Enjolras had a double-barrelled fowling-piece, Combeferre a National Guard's musket bearing the number of a legion, and in his waist-belt two pistols, which his unbuttoned coat allowed to be seen; Jean Prouvaire an old cavalry musketeer, and Bahorel a carbine; Courfeyrac brandished a sword drawn from a cane, while Feuilly with a naked sabre in his hand walked along shouting, "Long live Poland!" They reached the Quai Morland without neck-cloths or hats, panting for breath, drenched with rain, but with lightning in their eyes. Gavroche calmly approached them,—

"Where are we going?"

"Come," said Courfeyrac.

Behind Feuilly marched or rather bounded Bahorel, a fish in the water of revolt. He had a crimson waistcoat, and uttered words which smash everything. His waistcoat upset a passer-by, who cried wildly, "Here are the reds!"

"The red, the reds," Bahorel answered, "that's a funny fear, citizen. For my part, I do not tremble at a poppy, and the little red cap does not inspire me with any terror. Citizen, believe me, let us leave a fear of the red to horned cattle."

He noticed a corner wall, on which was placarded the most peaceful piece of paper in the world, a permission to eat eggs, a Lent mandamus addressed by the Archbishop of Paris to his "flock." Bahorel exclaimed,—

"A flock! a polite way of saying geese." And he tore the paper down. This conquered Gavroche, and from this moment he began studying Bahorel.

"Bahorel," Enjolras observed, "you are wrong, you should have left that order alone, for we have nothing to do with it, and you needlessly exposed your passion. Keep your stock by you, a man does not fire out of the ranks any more with his mind than with his gun."

"Every man has his own way, Enjolras," Bahorel replied; "the bishop's prose offends me, and I insist on eating eggs without receiving permission to do so. Yours is the cold burning style, while I amuse myself; moreover, I am not expending myself, but getting the steam up, and if I tore that order down, Hercle! it is to give me an appetite."

This word *hercle* struck Gavroche, for he sought every opportunity of instructing himself, and this tearing down of posters possessed his esteem. Hence he asked,—

"What's the meaning of *hercle*?"

Bahorel answered,—

"It means cursed name of a dog in Latin."

Here Bahorel noticed at a window a young pale man, with a black beard, who was watching them pass, probably a friend of the A, B, C. He shouted to him,—

"Quick with the cartridges, *para bellum*."

"A handsome man (*bel homme*), that's true," said Gavroche, who now comprehended Latin.

A tumultuous crowd accompanied them—students, artists, young men affiliated to the Cougourde of Aix, artizans, and lightermen, armed with sticks and bayonets, and some, like Combeferre, with pistols passed through their trouser-belt. An old man, who appeared very aged, marched in this band; he had no weapon, and hurried on, that he might not be left behind, though he looked thoughtful. It was M. Mabœuf. We will tell what had occurred. Enjolras and his friends were on the Bourdon Boulevard near the granaries, at the moment when the dragoons charged, and Enjolras, Courfeyrac, and Combeferre were among those who turned into the Rue Bassompierre shouting "To the barricades!" In the Rue Lesdiguières they met an old man walking along, and what attracted their attention was that he was moving very irregularly, as if intoxicated. Moreover, he had his hat in his hand, although it had rained the whole morning, and was raining rather hard at that very moment. Courfeyrac recognized Father Mabœuf, whom he knew through having accompanied Marius sometimes as far as his door. Knowing the peaceful and more than timid habits

of the churchwarden and bibliomaniac, and stupefied at seeing him in the midst of the tumult, within two yards of cavalry charges, almost in the midst of the musketry fire, bareheaded in the rain, and walking about among bullets, he accosted him, and the rebel of five-and-twenty and the octogenarian exchanged this dialogue.

“ Monsieur Mabœuf, you had better go home.”

“ Why so ? ”

“ There is going to be a row.”

“ Very good.”

“ Sabre-cuts and shots, M. Mabœuf.”

“ Very good.”

“ Cannon-shots.”

“ Very good. Where are you gentlemen going ? ”

“ To upset the Government.”

“ Very good.”

And he began following them, but since that moment had not said a word. His step had become suddenly firm, and when workmen offered him an arm, he declined it with a shake of the head. He walked almost at the head of the column, having at once the command of a man who is marching and the face of a man who is asleep.

“ What a determined old fellow ! ” the students muttered, and the rumour ran along the party that he was an ex-conventionalist, an old regicide. The band turned into the Rue de la Verrerie, and little Gavroche marched at the head, singing at the top of his voice, which made him resemble a bugler. He sang :

“ Voici la lune qui paraît,
Quand irons nous dans la forêt ?
Demandait Charlot à Charlotte,
Tou tou tou
Pour Chatou.

Je n'ai qu'un Dieu, qu'un roi, qu'un liard, et qu'une botte.

“ Pour avoir bu de grand matin
La rosée à même le thym,
Deux moineaux étaient en ribotte.

Zi zi zi

Pour Passy.

Je n'ai qu'un Dieu, qu'un roi, qu'un liard, et qu'une botte.

“ Et ces deux pauvres petits loups
Comme deux grives étaient soûls ;
Un tigre en riait dans sa grotte.

Don don don

Pour Meudon.

Je n'ai qu'un Dieu, qu'un roi, qu'un liard, et qu'une botte.

“L’un jurait et l’autre sacrait,
Quand irons nous dans la forêt?
Demandait Charlot à Charlotte.
Tin tin tin
Pour Pantin.
Je n’ai qu’un Dieu, qu’un roi, qu’un liard, et qu’une botte.”

They were going to St Merry. The band swelled every moment, and near the Rue des Billettes, a tall, grayish-haired man, whose rough bold face Courfeyrac, Enjolras, and Combeferre noticed, though not one of them knew him, joined them. Gavroche, busy singing, whistling, and shouting, and rapping the window-shutters with his pistol-butt, paid no attention to this man. As they went through the Rue de la Verrerie they happened to pass Courfeyrac’s door.

“That’s lucky,” said Courfeyrac, “for I have forgotten my purse and lost my hat.”

He left the band and bounded up-stairs, where he put on an old hat and put his purse in his pocket. He also took up a large square box of the size of a portmanteau, which was concealed among his dirty linen. As he was running down-stairs again his porteress hailed him.

“Monsieur de Courfeyrac!”

“Porteress, what is your name?” Courfeyrac retorted.

She stood in stupefaction.

“Why, you know very well, sir, that my name is Mother Veuvain.”

“Well then, if ever you call me M. de Courfeyrac again I shall call you Mother de Veuvain; now speak, what is it?”

“Some one wishes to speak to you.”

“Who is it?”

“I don’t know.”

“Where is he?”

“In my lodge.”

“Oh, the devil!” said Courfeyrac.

“Why! he has been waiting for more than an hour for you to come in.”

At the same time a species of young workman, thin, livid, small, marked with freckles, dressed in an old blouse and a pair of patched cotton velvet trousers, who looked more like a girl attired as a boy than a man, stepped out of the lodge and said to Courfeyrac in a voice which was not the least in the world a feminine voice,—

“Monsieur Marius, if you please?”

“He is not here.”

“Will he come in to-night?”

"I do not know."

And Courfeyrac added, "I shall not be in to-night."

The young man looked at him intently and asked,—

"Why not?"

"Because I shall not."

"Where are you going?"

"How does that concern you?"

"Shall I carry your chest for you?"

"I am going to the barricades."

"May I go with you?"

"If you like," Courfeyrac replied; "the street is free, and the pavement belongs to everybody."

And he ran off to join his friends again; when he had done so, he gave one of them the box to carry, and it was not till a quarter of an hour after that he noticed that the young man was really following them. A band does not go exactly where it wishes, and we have explained that a puff of wind directs it. They passed St Merry, and found themselves, without knowing exactly why, in the Rue St Denis.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HISTORY OF CORINTH FROM ITS FOUNDATION.

THE Parisians, who at the present day on entering the Rue Rambuteau from the side of the Halles notice on their right, opposite the Rue Mondétour, a basket-maker's shop having for sign a basket in the shape of Napoleon the Great, with this inscription,—

NAPOLÉON EST FAIT
TOUT EN OSIER,—

do not suspect the terrible scenes which this very site saw hardly thirty years ago. Here were the Rue de la Chanvrerie, which old title-deeds write Chanverrie, and the celebrated wine-shop called Corinth. Our readers well remember all that has been said about the barricade erected at this spot, and eclipsed by the way by the St Merry barricade. It is on this famous barricade of the Rue de la Chanvrerie, which has now fallen into deep night, that we are going to throw a little light.

For the clearness of our narrative, we may be permitted to have recourse to the simple mode which we employed for

Waterloo. Those persons who wish to represent to themselves in a tolerably exact manner the mass of houses which at that day stood at the north-east corner of the Halles, at the spot where the opening of the Rue Rambuteau now is, need only imagine an N whose two vertical strokes are the Rue de la Grande Truanderie, and the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and of which the Rue de la Petite Truanderie would be the cross-stroke. The old Rue Mondétour intersected the three strokes with the most tortuous angles, so that the Dædalian entanglement of these four streets was sufficient to make, upon a space of one hundred square yards, between the Halles and the Rue St Denis on one side, between the Rue du Cygne and the Rue des Precheurs, on the other side, seven islets of houses, strangely cut, of different heights, standing side-ways, and as if accidentally, and scarce separated by narrow cracks, like the blocks of stone in a dock. We say narrow cracks, and cannot give a fairer idea of these obscure, narrow, angular lanes, bordered by tenements eight storeys in height. These houses were so decrepit that in the Rues de la Chanvrerie and La Petite Truanderie, the frontages were supported by beams running across from one house to the other. The street was narrow and the gutter wide; the passer-by walked on a constantly damp pavement, passing shops like cellars, heavy posts shod with iron, enormous piles of filth, and gates armed with extraordinarily old palings. The Rue Rambuteau has devastated all this. The name of Mondétour exactly describes the windings of all this lay-stall. A little further on it was found even better expressed by the Rue Pirouette, which threw itself into the Rue Mondétour. The wayfarer who turned out of the Rue St Denis into the Rue de la Chanvrerie saw it gradually contract before him, as if he had entered an elongated funnel. At the end of the street, which was very short, he found the passage barred on the side of the Halles by a tall row of houses, and he might have fancied himself in a blind alley had he not perceived on his right and left two black cuts through which he could escape. It was the Rue Mondétour, which joined on one side the Rue des Precheurs, on the other the Rue du Cygne. At the end of this sort of blind alley, at the corner of the right-hand cutting, a house lower than the rest, forming a species of cape in the street, might be noticed. It is in this house, only two storeys high, that an illustrious cabaret had been installed for more than three hundred years. This inn produced a joyous noise at the very spot which old Theophile indicated in the two lines,—

Là branle le squelette horrible
D'un pauvre amant qui se pendit.

The spot was good, and the landlords succeeded each other from father to son. In the time of Mathurin Régnier this inn was called the "Rose-pot," and as rebuses were fashionable, it had as sign a post painted pink, which represented a "Poteau rose," hence the Pot-aux-roses. In the last century worthy Natoire, one of the fantastic masters disdained at the present day by the stiff school, having got tipsy several times in this inn at the same table where Régnier had got drunk, painted out of gratitude a bunch of currants on the pink post. The landlord, in his delight, changed his sign, and had the words gilt under the bunch, *au raisin de Corinthe*, hence the name of Corinth. Nothing is more natural to drunkards than ellipses, for they are the zig-zags of language. Corinth had gradually dethroned the rose-pot, and the last landlord of the dynasty, Father Hucheloup, being not acquainted with the tradition, had the post painted blue.

A ground-floor room in which was the bar, a first-floor room in which was a billiard-table, a spiral wooden staircase piercing the ceiling, wine on the tables, smoke on the walls, and candles by daylight—such was the inn. A staircase with a trap in the ground-floor room led to the cellar, and the apartments of the Hucheloups were on the second floor, reaching by a staircase more like a ladder, and through a door hidden in the wall of the large first-floor room. Under the roof were two garrets, the nests of the maid-servants, and the kitchen shared the ground-floor with the bar. Father Hucheloup might have been born a chemist, but was really a cook, and customers not only drank but ate in his wine-shop. Hucheloup had invented an excellent dish, which could be only eaten at his establishment; it was stuffed carp, which he called *carpes au gras*. This was eaten by the light of a tallow candle, or a lamp of the Louis XVI. style, on tables on which oil-cloth was nailed in lieu of a table-cloth. People came from a long distance, and Hucheloup one fine morning had thought it advisable to inform passers-by of his "speciality:" he dipped a brush in a pot of blacking, and as he had an orthography of his own, he improvised on his wall the following remarkable inscription,

CARPES AU GRAS.

One winter the showers and the hail amused themselves with

effacing the *s* which terminated the first word, and the *g* which began the last, and the following was left,

CARPE HO RAS.

By the aid of time and rain a humble gastronomic notice had become a profound counsel. In this way it happened that Hucheloup, not knowing French, had known Latin, had brought philosophy out of the kitchen, and while simply wishing to shut up Carême, equalled Horace. And the striking thing was that this also meant “enter my inn.” Nothing of all this exists at the present day; the Mondétour labyrinth was gutted and widened in 1847, and probably is no longer to be found at the present day. The Rue de la Chanvrerie and Corinth have disappeared under the pavement of the Rue Rambuteau. As we have said, Corinth was a meeting-place, if not a gathering-place, of Courfeyrac and his friends, and it was Grantaire who discovered it. He went in for the sake of the *carpe ho ras* and returned for the sake of the carp *au gras*. People drank there, ate there, and made a row there: they paid little, paid badly, or paid not at all, but were always welcome. Father Hucheloup was a worthy fellow. Hucheloup, whom we have just called a worthy fellow, was an eating-house keeper with a moustache, an amusing variety. He always looked ill-tempered, appeared wishful to intimidate his customers, growled at persons who came in, and seemed more disposed to quarrel with them than serve them. And yet we maintain people were always welcome. This peculiarity filled his bar, and brought to him young men who said, “Let us go and have a look at Father Hucheloup.” He had been a fencing-master, and would suddenly break out into a laugh; he had a rough voice, but was a merry fellow. His was a comical foundation with a tragical look; and he asked for nothing better than to frighten you, something like the snuff-boxes which had the shape of a pistol—the detonation produces a sneeze. He had for wife a Mother Hucheloup, a bearded and very ugly being. About 1830 Father Hucheloup died, and with him disappeared the secret of the carp *au gras*. His widow, who was almost inconsolable, carried on the business, but the cooking degenerated, and became execrable, and the wine, which had always been bad, was frightful. Courfeyrac and his friends, however, continued to go to Corinth—through pity, said Bossuet.

Widow Hucheloup was short of breath and shapeless, and had rustic recollections, which she deprived of their insipidity by her pronunciation. She had a way of her own of saying things which seasoned her reminiscences of her village and the spring:

it had formerly been her delight, she declared, to hear “the red-beasts singing in the awe-thorns.”* The first-floor room, where the restaurant was, was a large, long apartment, crowded with stools, chairs, benches, and tables, and an old rickety billiard-table. It was reached by the spiral staircase which led to a square hole in the corner of the room, like a ship’s hatchway. This apartment, lighted by only one narrow window and a constantly-burning lamp, had a garret-look about it, and all the four-legged articles of furniture behaved as if they had only three. The white-washed wall had for sole ornament the following quatrain in honour of Mame Hucheloup :

Elle étonne a dix pas, elle épouante à deux,
Une verrue habite en son nez hasardeux ;
On tremble à chaque instant qu’elle ne vous la mouche,
Et qu’un beau jour son nez ne tombe dans sa bouche.

This was written in charcoal on the wall. Mame Hucheloup, very like her description, walked past this quatrain from morning till night, with the most perfect tranquillity. Two servant girls, called Matelotte and Gibelotte, and who were never known by other names, helped Mame Hucheloup in placing on the tables bottles of blue wine, and the various messes served to the hungry guests in earthenware bowls. Matelotte, stout, round, red-haired, and noisy, an ex-favourite sultana of the defunct Hucheloup, was uglier than the ugliest mythological monster ; and yet, as it is always proper that the servant should be a little behind the mistress, she was not so ugly as Mame Hucheloup. Gibelotte, tall, delicate, white with a sympathetic whiteness, with blue circles round her eyes, and drooping lids, ever exhausted and oppressed, and suffering from what may be called chronic lassitude, the first to rise, the last to go to bed, waited on everybody, even the other servant, silently and gently, and smiling a sort of vague, sleepy smile through her weariness. Before entering the restaurant the following line written by Courfeyrac in chalk was legible,—

“ Régale si tu peux et mange si tu l’oses.”

* The original malapropism, “les loups-de-gorge chanter dans les ogrépines,” is utterly untranslateable. The above is only an attempt to convey some approximative idea.—L. W.

CHAPTER XIX.

PRELIMINARY GAIETIES.

LAIGLE of Meaux, as we know, liked better to live with Joly than any one else, and he had a lodging much as the bird has a branch. The two friends lived together, ate together, slept together, and had everything in common, Musichetta perhaps included. They were, to use the expression of the schools, *bini*, or twins. On the morning of June 5 they went to breakfast at Corinth. Joly had a cold in his head, and Laigle's coat was threadbare, while Joly was well dressed. It was about nine in the morning when they pushed open the door of Corinth, and went up to the first-floor room, where they were received by Matelotte and Gibelotte.

"Oysters, cheese, and ham," said Laigle.

They sat down at a table, the room was empty, there was no one in it but themselves. Gibelotte, recognizing Joly and Laigle, placed a bottle of wine on the table, and they attacked the first dozen of oysters. A head appeared in the hatchway and a voice said,—

"As I was passing I smelt a delicious perfume of Brie cheese, so I stepped in."

It was Grantaire; he took a stool and sat down at the table. Gibelotte, on seeing Grantaire, placed two bottles of wine on the table, which made three.

"Are you going to drink these two bottles?" Laigle asked Grantaire; who replied,—

"All men are ingenious, but you alone are ingenuous. Two bottles never yet astonished a man."

The others began with eating, but Grantaire began with drinking; a pint was soon swallowed.

"Why, you must have a hole in your stomach," said Laigle.

"Well, you have one in your elbow," Grantaire retorted, and after emptying his glass, he added,—

"Oh yes, Laigle of the funeral orations, your coat is old."

"I should hope so," Laigle replied, "for my coat and I live comfortably together. It has assumed all my wrinkles, does not hurt me anywhere, has moulded itself on my deformities, and is

complacent to all my movements, and I only feel its presence because it keeps me warm."

"*Grantaire*," Joly asked, "have you come from the boulevard?"

"No."

"Laigle and I have just seen the head of the procession pass. It is a marvellous sight."

"How quiet this street is," Laigle exclaimed. "Who could suspect that Paris is turned topsy-turvy? How easy it is to see that formerly there were monasteries all round here! Du Breuil and Sauval give a list of them, and so does the Abbé Lebœuf. There was all around where we are now sitting a busy swarm of monks, shod and barefooted, tonsured and bearded, grey, black, white, Franciscans, Minims, Capuchins, Carmelites, little Augustines, great Augustines, old Augustines—"

"Don't talk about monks," *Grantaire* interrupted, "for it makes me feel to want to scratch myself." Then he exclaimed,—

"Bouh! I have just swallowed a bad oyster, and that has brought back my hypochondria. Oysters are spoiled, servant girls are ugly, and I hate the human race. I passed just now before the great public library in the Rue Richelieu, and that pile of oyster-shells, which is called a library, disgusts me with thinking. What paper! what ink! what pothooks and hangers! all that has been written! what ass was that said man was a featherless biped? And then, too, I met a pretty girl I know, lovely as spring, and worthy to be called Floreal, who was ravished, transported, happy in Paradise, the wretch, because yesterday a hideous banker spotted with small-pox deigned to throw his handkerchief to her! Alas! woman looks out for a keeper quite as much as a lover; cats catch mice as well as birds. This girl not two months ago was living respectably in a garret, and fitted little copper circles into the eyelet-holes of stays, what do you call it? She sewed, she had a flock bed, she lived by the side of a pot of flowers, and was happy. Now she is a bankeress, and the transformation took place last night. I met the victim this morning perfectly happy, and the hideous thing was that the wretched creature was quite as pretty this morning as she was yesterday, and there was no sign of the financier on her face. Roses have this more or less than women, that the traces which the caterpillars leave on them are visible. Ah! there is no morality left in the world, and I call as witnesses the myrtle, symbol of love, the laurel, symbol of war, the olive, that absurd symbol of peace, the

apple-tree, which nearly choked Adam with its pips, and the fig-tree, the grandfather of petticoats. As for justice, do you know what justice is? The Gauls covet Clusium, Rome protects Clusium and asks what wrong Clusium has done them. Brennus answers, “The wrong which Alba did to you, the wrong that Fidène did to you, the wrong that the Equi, Volscians, and Sabines did to you. They were your neighbours, and the Clusians are ours. We understand neighbourhood in the same way as you do. You stole Alba, and we take Clusium.” Rome says, “You shall not take Clusium,” and Brennus took Rome, and then cried *Væ victis!* That is what justice is! Oh, what birds of prey there are in the world! What eagles, what eagles! the thought makes my flesh creep.”

He held out his glass to Joly, who filled it, then drank, and continued almost uninterrupted by the glass of wine, which no one noticed, not even himself:—

“Brennus who takes Rome is an eagle; the banker who takes the grisette is an eagle; and there is no more shame in one than the other. So let us believe nothing; there is only one reality, drinking. Of whatever opinion you may be, whether you back the lean cock, like the canton of Uri, or the fat cock, like the canton of Glarus, it is of no consequence, drink. You talk to me about the boulevard, the procession, &c.; what, are we going to have another revolution? this poverty of resources astonishes me on the part of le bon Dieu; and He must at every moment set to work greasing the groove of events. Things stick and won’t move,—look sharp then with a revolution; le bon Dieu has always got his hands black with that filthy cart-wheel grease. In his place I should act more simply, I should not wind up my machinery at every moment, but lead the human race evenly; I should knit facts mesh by mesh without breaking the thread; I should have no temporary substitutes, and no extraordinary repertory. What you fellows call progress has two motive powers, men and events, but it is a sad thing that something exceptional is required every now and then. For events as for men the ordinary stock company is not sufficient; among men there must be geniuses, and among events revolutions. Great accidents are the law, and the order of things cannot do without them; and, judging from the apparition of comets, we might be tempted to believe that Heaven itself feels a want of leading actors. At the moment when it is least expected, God bills the wall of the firmament with a meteor, and some strange star follows, underlined by an enormous tail. And that causes the death of Cæsar; Brutus gives him a dagger-thrust, and God deals him

a blow with a comet. Crac! here is an aurora borealis, here is a revolution, here is a great man: '93 in big letters, Napoleon in a catch-line, and the comet of 1811 at the head of the bill. Ah! what a fine blue poster, spangled all over with unexpected flashes! Boum! boum! an extraordinary sight. Raise your eyes, idlers. Everything is dishevelled, the star as well as the drama. Oh Lord! it is too much and not enough, and these resources, drawn from exceptional circumstances, seem magnificence and are only poverty. My friends, Providence has fallen into the stage of expedients. What does a revolution prove? that God is running short: He produces a *coup d'état*, because there is a solution of continuity between the present and the future, and He is unable to join the ends. In fact, this confirms me in my conjectures as to the state of Jehovah's fortune; and on seeing so much discomfort above and below, so much paltriness and pinching and saving and distress both in heaven and on earth, from the bird which has not a seed of grain to myself who have not one hundred thousand francs a year,—on seeing human destiny which is very much worn, and even royal destiny which is threadbare, as witness the Prince de Condé hung,—on seeing winter, which is only a rent in the zenith, through which the wind blows,—on seeing so many rags, even in the bran-new morning purple on the tops of the hills,—on seeing drops of dew, those false pearls and hoar-frost, that *strass*—on seeing humanity unripped and events patched, and so many spots on the sun, so many holes in the moon, and so much wretchedness everywhere—I suspect that God is not rich. There is an appearance, it is true, but I see the pressure, and He gives a revolution just as a merchant whose cash-box is empty gives a ball. We must not judge the gods by appearances, and under the gilding of heaven I catch a glimpse of a poor universe. There is a bankruptcy in creation, and that is why I am dissatisfied. Just see, this is June 5, and it is almost night; I have been waiting since morning for day to come, and it has not come, and I will wager that it does not come at all. It is the irregularity of a badly-paid clerk. Yes, everything is badly arranged, nothing fits into anything, this old world is thrown out of gear, and I place myself in the ranks of the opposition. Everything goes crooked, and the Universe is close-fisted; it is like the children,—those who ask get nothing, and those who don't ask get something. And then, again, it afflicts me to look at that bald-headed Laigle of Meaux, and I am humiliated by the thought that I am of the same age as that knee. However, I criticize but do not insult; the

universe is what it is, and I speak without any evil meaning, and solely to do my duty by my conscience. Ah ! by all the saints of Olympus, and by all the gods of Paradise, I was not made to be a Parisian, that is to say, to be constantly thrown like a shuttle-cock between two battledores, from a group of idlers to a group of noisy fellows. No ! I was meant to be a Turk, looking all day at Egyptian damsels performing those exquisite dances, which are as lubricous as the dreams of a chaste man, or a Beauceron peasant, or a Venetian gentleman surrounded by gentildonnes, or a small German prince, supplying one half a soldier to the Confederation, and employing his leisure hours in drying his stockings on his hedge, that is to say, his frontier ! Such were the destinies for which I was born. Yes, I said Turk, and I will not recall it. I do not understand why the Turks are usually looked upon askance, for Mahom has some good points ; let us respect the inventor of harems of houris, and Paradises of Odalisques, and we ought not to insult Mahometism, the only religion adorned with a hen-coop ! After this, I insist on drinking, for the earth is a great piece of stupidity. And it appears that all those asses are going to fight, to break each other's heads and massacre one another in the heart of summer, in the month of June, when they might go off with a creature on their arm to inhale in the fields the perfume of that immense cup of tea of cut hay. Really too many follies are committed. An old broken lantern, which I saw just now at a broker's, suggests a reflection to me, 'it is high time to enlighten the human race.' Yes, I am sad again, and it has come from an oyster and a revolution sticking in my throat. I am growing lugubrious again. Oh, frightful old world ! on your surface people strive, are destitute, prostitute themselves, kill themselves, and grow accustomed to it ! "

And after this burst of eloquence Grantaire had a burst of coughing, which was well deserved.

" Talking of a revolution," said Joly, " it seeps that Barius is decidedly in love."

" Do you know who with ? " Laigle asked.

" Do. "

" No ? "

" Do, I tell you."

" The loves of Marius !" Grantaire exclaimed, " I can see them from here. Marius is a fog and will have found a vapour. Marius belongs to the poetic race, and poet and madman are convertible terms. *Thymbræus Apollo*. Marius and his Marie, or his Maria, or his Mariette, or his Marion, must be a funny brace of lovers. I can fancy what it is : ecstasies in

which kissing is forgotten. Chaste on earth but connected in the infinitude. They are souls that have feelings, and they sleep together in the stars."

Grantaire was attacking his second bottle, and perhaps his second harangue, when a new head emerged from the staircase hatchway. It was a boy under ten years of age, ragged, very short and yellow, with a bull-dog face, a quick eye, and an enormous head of hair: he was dripping with wet, but seemed happy. The lad choosing without hesitating among the three, though he knew none of them, addressed Laigle of Meaux.

"Are you M. Bossuet?" he asked.

"I am called so," Laigle replied; "what do you want?"

"A tall, light-haired gent said to me on the boulevard, 'Do you know Mother Hucheloup's?' I said, 'Yes, in the Rue Chancrerie, the old one's widow.' Says he to me, 'Go there, you will find Monsieur Bossuet there, and say to him from me, A—B—C.' I suppose it's a trick played you, eh? he gave me ten sous."

"Joly, lend me ten sous," said Laigle; and turning to Grantaire, "Grantaire, lend me ten sous."

This made twenty sous, which Laigle gave the lad. "Thank you, sir," he said.

"What is your name?" Laigle asked.

"Navet, Gavroche's friend."

"Stay with us," Laigle said.

"Breakfast with us," Grantaire added.

The lad replied, "I can't, for I belong to the procession, and have to cry, 'Down with Polignac.'"

And, drawing his foot slowly after him, which is the most respectful of bows possible, he went away. When he was gone, Grantaire remarked,—

"That is the pure gamin, and there are many varieties in the gamin genus. The notary-gamin is called 'leap-the-gutter'; the cook-gamin is called 'scullion'; the baker-gamin is called 'doughey'; the footman-gamin is called 'tiger'; the sailor-gamin is called 'powder monkey'; the soldier-gamin is called 'a child of the regiment'; the tradesman-gamin is called 'errand-boy'; the courtier-gamin is called 'page'; the royal-gamin is called 'dauphin'; and the divine-gamin is called 'St Bambino'."

In the meanwhile Laigle meditated, and said in a low voice,—

"A—B—C, that is to say, funeral of General Lamarque."

"The tall, fair man," Grantaire observed, "is Enjolras, who has sent to warn you."

"Shall we go?" asked Bossuet.

"It's raibing," said Joly; "I have sworn to go through fire

but dot through water, and I do dot wish to bake by cold worse."

"I shall stay here," Grantaire remarked; "I prefer a breakfast to a hearse."

"Conclusion, we remain," Laigle continued; "in that case let us drink. Besides, we may miss the funeral without missing the row."

"Ah, the row!" cried Joly, "I'b id that."

Laigle rubbed his hands.

"So the revolution of 1830 is going to begin over again."

"I do not care a rap for your revolution," Grantaire remarked, "and I do not execrate the present Government, for it is the crown tempered by the cotton night-cap, a sceptre terminating in an umbrella. In such weather as this Louis Philippe might use his royalty for two objects, stretch out the sceptre-end against the people, and open the umbrella-end against the sky."

The room was dark, and heavy clouds completely veiled the daylight. There was no one in the wine-shop or in the streets, for everybody had gone "to see the events."

"Is it mid-day or mid-night?" Bossuet asked; "I can see nothing; bring a candle, Gibelotte."

Grantaire was drinking sorrowfully.

"Enjolras despairs me," he muttered. "Enjolras said to himself, 'Joly is ill and Grantaire is drunk,' and so he sent Navet to Bossuet. And yet, if he had fetched me, I would have followed him. All the worse for Enjolras! I will not go to his funeral."

This resolution formed, Bossuet, Grantaire, and Joly did not stir from the wine-shop, and at about 2 P.M. the table at which they sat was covered with empty bottles. Two candles burnt on it, one in a perfectly green copper candle-stick, the other in the neck of a cracked water-bottle. Grantaire had led Joly and Bossuet to wine, and Bossuet and Joly had brought Grantaire back to joy. As for Grantaire, he gave up wine at mid-day, as a poor inspirer of dreams. Wine is not particularly valued by serious sots, for in ebriety there is black magic and white magic, and wine is only the white magic. Grantaire was attracted rather than arrested by the blackness of a formidable intoxication yawning before him, and he had given up bottles and taken to the dram glass, which is an abyss. Not having at hand either opium or hasheesh, and wishing to fill his brain with darkness, he turned to that frightful mixture of brandy, stout, and absinthe, which produces such terrible lethargies. Of these three vapours, beer, brandy, and absinthe, the lead of the soul is made: they are three darknesses in which the

celestial butterfly is drowned; and three dumb furies, nightmare, night, and death, which hover over the sleeping Psyche, are produced, in a membranous smoke vaguely condensed into a bat's wing. Grantaire had not yet reached that phase, far from it: he was prodigiously gay, and Bossuet and Joly kept even with him. Grantaire added to the eccentric accentuation of words and ideas the devagation of gestures; he laid his left hand on his knee with a dignified air, and with his neckcloth unloosed, straddling his stool, and with his full glass in his right hand, he threw these solemn words at the stout servant-girl, Matelotte.

"Open the gates of the Palace! Let every man belong to the French Academy, and have the right of embracing Madame Hucheloup! Let us drink."

And turning to the landlady, he added,—

"Antique female, consecrated by custom, approach, that I may contemplate thee."

And Joly exclaimed,—

"Batelotte and Gibelotte, don't give Grantaire ady bore drink. He is spending a frightful sum, and odly since this borning has devoured in shabeful prodigality two francs, dwenty-five centibes."

And Grantaire went on,—

"Who has unhooked the stars without my leave, in order to place them on the table in lieu of candles?"

Bossuet, whō was very drunk, had retained his calmness, and was sitting on the sill of the open window, letting the rain drench his back, while he gazed at his two friends. All at once he heard behind him a tumult, hurried footsteps, and shouts of *To arms!* He turned, and noticed in the Rue St Denis at the end of the Rue Chanvrerie, Enjolras passing, carbine in hand, Gavroche with his pistol, Feuilly with his sabre, Courfeyrac with his sword, Jean Prouvaire with his musquetoon, Combeferre with his fowling-piece, Bahorel with his, and the whole armed and stormy band that followed them. The Rue de la Chanvrerie was not a pistol-shot in length, so Bossuet improvised a speaking-trumpet with his two hands round his mouth, and shouted,—

"Courfeyrac! Courfeyrac! hiloh!"

Courfeyrac heard the summons, perceived Bossuet, and walked a few steps down the Rue de la Chanvrerie, exclaiming, "What do you want?" which was crossed by a "Where are you going?"

"To make a barricade," Courfeyrac answered.

"Well, why not make it here? the spot is good."

"That is true, Eagle," Courfeyrac remarked.

And at a sign from Courfeyrac the band rushed into the Rue de la Chanvrerie.

The ground was, in fact, admirably suited ; the entrance of the street was wide, the end narrowed, and, like a blind alley, Corinth formed a contraction in it, the Rue de Mondétour could be easily barred right and left, and no attack was possible save by the Rue St Denis, that is to say, from the front and in the open. Bossuet drunk had had the inspiration of Hannibal sober. At the sound of the band rushing on, terror seized on the whole street, and not a passer-by but disappeared. More quickly than a flash of lightning, shops, stalls, gates, doors, Venetian blinds, and shutters of every size, were shut from the ground-floor to the roofs, at the end, on the right, and on the left. An old terrified woman fixed up a mattress before her window with clothes-props, in order to deaden the musketry, and the public-house alone remained open—and for an excellent reason, because the insurgents had rushed into it.

"Oh Lord, oh Lord!" Mame Hucheloup sighed.

Bossuet ran down to meet Courfeyrac, and Joly, who had gone to the window, shouted,—

"Courfeyrac, you ought to have brought an umbrella. You will catch cold."

In a few minutes twenty iron bars were pulled down from the railings in front of the inn, and ten yards of pavement dug up. Gavroche and Bahorel seized, as it passed, the truck of a lime-dealer, of the name of Anceau, and found in it three barrels of lime, which they placed under the piles of paving-stones; Enjolras had raised the cellar-flap, and all Mame Hucheloup's empty casks went to join the barrels of lime; Feuilly, with his fingers accustomed to illumine the delicate sticks of fans, reinforced the barrels and the trucks with two massive piles of stones. The supporting shores were pulled away from the frontage of an adjoining house, and laid on the casks. When Courfeyrac and Bossuet turned round, one half the street was already barred by a rampart, taller than a man, for there is nothing like the hand of the people to build up anything that is built by demolishing. Matelotte and Gibelotte were mixed up with the workmen, and the latter went backwards and forwards, loaded with rubbish, and her lassitude helped at the barricade. She served paving-stones, as she would have served wine, with a sleepy look. An omnibus drawn by two white horses passed the end of the street; Bossuet jumped over the stones, ran up, stopped the driver, ordered the passengers to get out, offered his hand to "the ladies," dismissed the conductor, and returned, pulling the horses on by the bridles.

"Omnibuses," he said, "must not pass before Corinth.
Non licet omnibus adire Corinthum."

A moment after the unharnessed horses were straggling down the Rue Mondétour, and the omnibus lying on its side completed the barricade. Mame Hucheloup, quite upset, had sought refuge on the first-floor; her eyes were wandering and looked without seeing, and her cries of alarm dared not issue from her throat.

"It is the end of the world," she muttered.

Joly deposited a kiss on Mame Hucheloup's fat, red, wrinkled neck, and said to Grantaire, "My dear fellow, I have always considered a woman's neck an infinitely delicate thing." But Grantaire had reached the highest regions of dithyramb. When Matelotte came up to the first-floor he seized her round the waist, and burst into loud peals of laughter at the window.

"Matelotte is ugly," he cried, "Matelotte is the ideal of ugliness, she is a chimera. Here is the secret of her birth,—a Gothic Pygmalion, who was carving cathedral gargoyles, fell in love on a fine morning with the most horrible of them. He implored love to animate it, and this produced Matelotte. Look at her, citizens! She has chromate of lead-coloured hair, like Titian's mistress, and is a good girl; I will answer that she fights well, for every good girl contains a hero. As for Mother Hucheloup, she is an old brave; look at her mustachios, she inherited them from her husband. She will fight too, and the couple will terrify the whole of the suburbs. Comrades, we will overthrow the Government, so truly as there are fifteen intermediate acids between margaric acid and formic acid; however, it is a matter of perfect indifference to me. My father always detested me because I could not understand mathematics; I only understand love and liberty. I am Grantaire, the good fellow; never having had any money, I have not grown accustomed to it, and for that reason have never wanted it; but, had I been rich, there would be no poor left! you would have seen! Oh, if good hearts had large purses, how much better things would be! I can imagine the Saviour with Rothschild's fortune! what good he would do! Matelotte, embrace me! You are voluptuous and timid; you have cheeks that claim the kiss of a sister, and lips that claim the kiss of a lover!"

"Hold your tongue, barrel!" Courfeyrac said.

Grantaire replied,—

"I am the Capitoul and master of the Floral games!"

Enjolras, who was standing on the top of the barricade, gun in hand, raised his handsome, stern face. Enjolras, as we

know, blended the Spartan with the Puritan; he would have died at Thermopylæ with Leonidas, and burnt Drogheda with Cromwell.

"Grantaire," he cried, "go and sleep off your wine elsewhere; this is the place for intoxication, and not for drunkenness. Do not dishonour the barricade."

These angry words produced on Grantaire a singular effect, and it seemed as if he had received a glass of cold water in his face. He appeared suddenly sobered, sat down near the window, gazed at Enjolras with inexpressible tenderness, and said to him,—

"Let me sleep here."

"Go and sleep elsewhere," Enjolras cried.

But Grantaire, still fixing on him his tender and misty eyes, answered,—

"Let me sleep here till I die here."

Enjolras looked at him disdainfully.

"Grantaire, you are incapable of believing, thinking, wishing, living, and dying."

Grantaire replied in a grave voice,—

"You will see."

He stammered a few more unintelligible words, then his head fell noisily on the table, and—as is the usual effect of the second period of ebriety into which Enjolras had roughly and suddenly thrust him—a moment later he was asleep.

CHAPTER XX.

PREPARATIONS.

BAHOREL, delighted with the barricade, exclaimed,—"How well the street looks when dressed for a ball!"

Courfeyrac, while gradually demolishing the public-house, tried to console the widowed landlady.

"Mother Hucheloup, were you not complaining the other day that you had been summoned by the police, because Gibelotte shook a counterpane out of the window?"

"Yes, my good Monsieur Courfeyrac. Ah! good gracious! are you going to put that table too in your horror? Yes, and the Government also condemned me to a fine of one hundred francs on account of a flower-pot that fell out of the garret into the street. Is that not abominable?"

" Well, Mother Hucheloup, we are going to avenge you."

Mother Hucheloup did not exactly see the advantage accruing to her from the reparation made her. She was satisfied after the fashion of the Arab woman who, having received a box on the ears from her husband, went to complain to her father, crying vengeance, and saying,—“ Father, you owe my husband affront for affront.” The father asked, “ On which cheek did you receive the blow ? ” “ On the left cheek.” The father boxed her right cheek, and said, “ Now you must be satisfied. Go and tell your husband that he buffeted my daughter, but I have buffeted his wife.” The rain had ceased, and recruits began to arrive. Artizans brought under their blouses a barrel of gunpowder, a hamper containing carboys of vitriol, two or three carnival torches, and a basket full of lamps, “ remaining from the king’s birthday,” which was quite recent, as it was celebrated on May 1. It was said that this ammunition was sent by a grocer in the Faubourg St Antoine of the name of Pepin. The only lantern in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and all those in the surrounding streets, were broken. Enjolras, Combeferre, and Courfeyrac directed everything, and now two barricades were erected simultaneously, both of which were supported by Corinth and formed a square ; the larger one closed the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and the smaller the Rue Mondétour on the side of the Rue du Cygne. This latter barricade, which was very narrow, was merely made of barrels and paving-stones. There were about fifty workmen there, of whom three were armed with guns, for on the road they had borrowed a gunsmith’s entire stock.

Nothing could be stranger or more motley than this group ; one had a sleeved waistcoat, a cavalry sabre, and a pair of holster pistols, another was in shirt sleeves, with a round hat, and a powder-flask hung at his side, while a third was cuirassed with nine sheets of grey paper, and was armed with a saddler’s awl. There was one who shouted, “ Let us exterminate to the last, and die on the point of our bayonet ! ” This man had no bayonet. Another displayed over his coat the belts and pouch of a national guard, with these words sewn in red worsted on the cover—*public order*. There were many muskets, bearing the numbers of legions, few hats, no neck-ties, a great many bare arms, and a few pikes ; add to this all ages, all faces, short pale youths and bronzed labourers at the docks. All were in a hurry, and while assisting each other, talked about the possible chances—that they were sure of one regiment, and Paris would rise. These were terrible remarks, with which a sort of cordial joviality was mingled ; they might have been

taken for brothers, though they did not know each other's names. Great dangers have this beauty about them, that they throw light on the fraternity of strangers.

A fire was lighted in the kitchen, and men were melting in a bullet-mould, bowls, spoons, forks, and all the pewter articles of the public-house. They drank while doing this, and caps and slugs lay pell-mell on the table with glasses of wine. In the billiard-room Mame Hucheloup, Matelotte, and Gibelotte, variously affected by terror,—as one was brutalized by it, another had her breath stopped, while the third was awakened—were tearing up old sheets and making lint; three insurgents helped them, three hairy, bearded, and moustached fellows, who pulled the linen asunder with the fingers of a sempstress and made them tremble. The tall man, whom Courfeyrac, Combeferre, and Enjolras had noticed, as he joined the band at the corner of the Rue des Billettes, was working at the small barricade, and making himself useful. Gavroche was working at the large one, and as for the young man who had waited for Courfeyrac at his lodgings and asked after M. Marius, he disappeared just about the time when the omnibus was overthrown.

Gavroche, who was perfectly radiant, had taken the arrangements on himself; he came, went, ascended, descended, went up again, rustled and sparkled. He seemed to be there for the encouragement of all; had he a spur? certainly in his misery: had he wings? certainly in his joy. Gavroche was a whirlwind, he was seen incessantly and constantly heard, and he filled the air, being everywhere at once. He was a sort of almost irritating ubiquity, and it was impossible to stop with him. The enormous barricade felt him on its crupper; he annoyed the idlers, excited the slothful, reanimated the fatigued, vexed the thoughtful, rendered some gay, and gave others time to breathe, set some in a passion, and all in motion; he piqued a student and stung a workman, he halted, then started again, flew over the turmoil and the efforts, leapt from one to the other, murmured, buzzed, and harassed the whole team; he was the fly of the immense revolutionary coach. Perpetual movement was in his little arms, and perpetual clamour in his little lungs.

"Push ahead; more paving-stones, more barrels, more vehicles! where are there any? We want a hod-load of plaster to stop up this hole. Your barricade is very small, and must mount. Put everything into it, smash up the house; a barricade is Mother Gibou's tea. Hilloh! there's a glass door."

This made the workmen exclaim,—

“A glass door! what would you have us do with that, tubercle ?”*

“Hercules yourselves,” Gavroche retorted ; “a glass door in a barricade is excellent, for, though it does not prevent the attack, it makes it awkward to take it. Have you never boned apples over a wall on which there was broken glass? A glass door cuts the corns of the National Guards when they try to climb up the barricade. By Job! glass is treacherous. Well, you fellows have no very bright imagination.”

He was furious with his useless pistol, and went from one to the other, saying,—“A gun! I want a gun! Why don’t you give me a gun?”

“A gun for you?” said Combeferre.

“Well, why not?” Gavroche answered ; “I had one in 1830, when we quarrelled with Charles X.”

Enjolras shrugged his shoulders.

“When all the men have guns we will give them to boys.”

Gavroche turned firmly, and answered him,—

“If you are killed before me I will take yours.”

“Gamin!” said Enjolras.

“Puppy!” said Gavroche.

A dandy lounging past the end of the street created a diversion ; Gavroche shouted to him,—

“Come to us, young man! what, will you do nothing for your old country?”

The dandy fled.

The journals of the day which stated that the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, that *almost impregnable fortress*, as they called it, reached the level of a first-floor, are mistaken, for the truth is, that it did not exceed an average height of six or seven feet. It was so built that the combatants could, at will, either disappear behind it or ascend to its crest, by means of a quadruple row of paving-stones arranged like steps inside. Externally the front of the barricade, composed of piles of paving-stones and barrels, held together by joists and planks, passed through the wheels of the truck and the omnibus, had a bristling and inextricable appearance. A gap, sufficiently wide for one man to pass, was left between the house wall and the end of the barricade furthest from the wine-shop, so that a sortie was possible. The pole of the omnibus was held upright by ropes, and a red flag fixed to this pole floated over the barricade. The small Mondétour barricade, concealed behind the

* Gavroche evidently connects “Tubercle” in some offensive manner with “Hercule.”

wine-shop, could not be seen, but the two barricades combined formed a real redoubt. Enjolras and Courfeyrac had not thought it advisable to barricade the other portion of the Rue Mondétour, which opens on to the Halles, as they doubtless wished to maintain a possible communication with the outside, and had but little fear of being attacked by the difficult and dangerous Rue des Prêcheurs, with the exception of this issue left free, which constituted what Folard would have called in a strategic style, a zigzag, and of the narrow passage in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, the interior of the barricade, in which the wine-shop formed a salient angle, presented an irregular quadrilateral, enclosed on all sides. There was a space of twenty yards between the great barricade and the tall houses which formed the end of the street, so that it might be said that the barricade leant against these houses, which were all inhabited, but closed from top to bottom.

All this labour was completed without any obstacle, in less than an hour, during which this handful of men had not seen a single bearskin-cap or bayonet. The few citizens who still ventured at this moment of riot into the Rue St Denis took a glance into the Rue de la Chanvrerie, perceived the barricade, and doubled their pace. When the two barricades were completed and the flag was hoisted, a table was pulled from the wine-shop into the street, and Courfeyrac got upon it. Enjolras brought up the square chest, which Courfeyrac opened, and it proved to be full of cartridges. When they saw these cartridges the bravest trembled, and there was a moment's silence. Courfeyrac distributed the cartridges smilingly, and each received thirty : many had powder, and began making others with the bullets which had been cast ; as for the powder barrel, it was on a separate table, near the door, and was held in reserve. The assembly, which was traversing the whole of Paris, did not cease, but in the end it had become a monotonous sound, to which they no longer paid any attention. This noise at one moment retired, at another came nearer, with lugubrious undulations. The guns and carbines were loaded all together, without precipitation and with a solemn gravity. Enjolras then stationed three sentries outside the barricades, one in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, the second in the Rue des Prêcheurs, the third at the corner of the Petite Truanderie. Then, when the barricades were built, the posts assigned, the guns loaded, the sentries set, the insurgents alone in these formidable streets, through which no one now passed, surrounded by dumb and, as it were, dead houses, in which no human movement palpitated, enveloped in the menacing darkness, in the midst of that silence and obscurity

in which they felt something advancing, and which had something tragical and terrifying about it, isolated, armed, determined, and tranquil—waited.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE RECRUIT OF THE RUE DES BILLETTES.

DURING the hours of waiting, what did they? we are bound to tell it, because this is historical. While the men were making cartridges and the women lint, while a large stewpan full of melted tin and lead, intended for the bullet-mould, was smoking on a red-hot chafing-dish, while the vedettes were watching with shouldered guns on the barricade, while Enjolras, whom it was impossible to distract, watched the vedettes, Combeferre, Courfeyrac, Jean Prouvaire, Feuilly, Bossuet, Joly, Bahorel, and a few others, assembled, as in the most peaceful days of their student conversations, and in one corner of the wine-shop converted into a casemate, two paces from the barricade which they had raised, and with their loaded and primed muskets leaning against the back of their chairs, these fine young men, so near their last hour, wrote love verses. The hour, the spot, the recollections of youth recalled, a few stars which were beginning to glisten in the sky, the funereal repose of these deserted streets, the imminence of the inexorable adventure which was preparing, gave a pathetic charm to these verses murmured in a low voice in the twilight by Jean Prouvaire, who, as we said, was a gentle poet.

In the mean while a lamp had been lit on the small barricade, and on the large one one of those wax torches such as may be seen on Shrove Tuesday in front of the vehicles crowded with masks that are proceeding to the Courtille. These torches, we know, came from the Faubourg St Antoine. The torch was placed in a species of lantern of paving-stones closed on three sides to protect it from the wind, and arranged so that the entire light should fall on the flag. The street and the barricade remained plunged in darkness, and nothing was visible save the red flag formidably illumined, as if by an enormous dark lantern. This light added a strange and terrible purple to the scarlet of the flag.

Night had quite set in, and nothing occurred, only confused

rumours and fusillades now and then could be heard, but they were rare, badly maintained, and distant. This respite, which was prolonged, was a sign that the Government was taking its time and collecting its strength. These fifty men were waiting for the coming of sixty thousand. Enjolras was attacked by that impatience which seizes on powerful minds when they stand on the threshold of formidable events. He looked up Gavroche, who was busy manufacturing cartridges in the ground-floor room by the dubious light of two candles placed on the bar for precaution, on account of the gunpowder sprinkled over the tables. These two candles threw no rays outside, and the insurgents allowed no light in the upper floors. Gavroche was at this moment greatly occupied, though not precisely with his cartridge.

The recruit from the Rue des Billettes had come into the room and seated himself at the least-lighted table. A Brown Bess of the large model had fallen to his share, and he held it between his legs. Gavroche up to this moment, distracted by a hundred "amusing" things, had not even seen this man. When he entered Gavroche looked after him, mechanically admiring his musket, but when the man was seated the gamin suddenly rose. Those who might have watched this man would have noticed him observe everything in the barricade, and the band of insurgents, with singular attention, but when he entered the room he fell into a state of contemplation, and seemed to see nothing of what was going on. The gamin approached this pensive man, and began walking round him on tip-toe, in the same way as people move round a man whom they are afraid of awaking. At the same time all the grimaces of an old man passed over his childish face, at once so impudent and so serious, so giddy and so profound, so gay and so affecting, and these grimaces signified, "Oh stuff! it is not possible, I must see double—I am dreaming—can it be?—no, it is not—yes, it is—no, it is not." Gavroche balanced himself on his heels, clenched his fists in his pockets, moved his neck like a bird, and expended on an enormously outstretched lip all the sagacity of a lower lip. He was stupefied, uncertain, convinced, and dazzled. He looked like the chief of the eunuchs at the slave-market discovering a Venus among the girls, and the air of an amateur recognizing a Raphael in a pile of daubs. All about him was at work, the instinct that scents and the intellect that combines; it was plain that an event was happening to Gavroche. It was when he was deepest in thought that Enjolras accosted him.

"You are little," he said, "and will not be seen. Go out of the barricades, slip along the houses, pass through as many streets as you can, and come back to tell me what is going on."

Gavroche drew himself up.

"So little ones are good for something ! that's lucky ! I'm off. In the mean while, trust to the little and distrust the big," and Gavroche, raising his head and dropping his voice, added, as he pointed to the man of the Rue des Billettes,—

" You see that tall fellow ? "

" Well ? "

" He's a spy."

" Are you sure ? "

" Not a fortnight back he pulled me down by the ear from the cornice of the Pont Royal where I was taking the air."

Enjolras hurriedly left the gamin and whispered a few words to a labourer from the wine-docks who was present. The labourer went out and returned almost immediately, followed by three others. The four men, four broad-shouldered porters, stationed themselves silently behind the table at which the man was seated, in evident readiness to fall upon him, and then Enjolras walked up to the man and asked him,—

" Who are you ? "

At this sudden question the man started, he looked into the depths of Enjolras' candid eyeballs, and seemed to read his thoughts. He gave a smile, which was at once the most disdainful, energetic, and resolute possible, and answered, with a haughty gravity,—

" I see what you mean,—well, yes ! "

" Are you a spy ? "

" I am an agent of the authority ! "

" And your name is—? "

" Javert."

Enjolras gave the four men a sign, and in a twinkling, before Javert had time to turn round, he was collared, thrown down, bound, and searched. They found on him a small round card fixed between two pieces of glass, and bearing on one side the arms of France, with the motto, " Surveillance and vigilance," and on the other this notice, " JAVERT, police Inspector, fifty-two years of age," and the signature of the Prefect of Police of that day, M. Gisquet. He had also a watch and a purse containing some pieces of gold, and both were left him. Behind his watch at the bottom of his fob a paper was found, which Enjolras unfolded, and on which he read these lines, written by the Prefect of Police himself,—

" So soon as his political mission is concluded, Javert will assure himself by a special watch whether it is true that crim-

inals assemble on the slope of the right bank of the Seine, near the bridge of Jena."

When the search was ended Javert was raised from the ground, his arms were tied behind his back, and he was fastened in the middle of the room to the celebrated post, which in olden times gave its name to the wine-shop. Gavroche, who had watched the whole scene and approved of everything with a silent shake of the head, went up to Javert, and said,—

"The mouse has trapped the cat."

All this took place so quickly that it was completed before those outside the wine-shop were aware of it. Javert had not uttered a cry, but, on seeing him fastened to the post, Courfeyrac, Bossuet, Combeferre, Joly, and the men scattered over the two barricades, flocked in. Javert, who was surrounded with cords so that he could not stir, raised his head with the intrepid serenity of a man who has never told a falsehood.

"It is a spy," said Enjolras, and turning to Javert, "You will be shot two minutes before the barricade is taken."

Javert replied, with his most imperious accent,—

"Why not at once?"

"We are saving of powder."

"Then settle the affair with a knife."

"Spy," said the beautiful Enjolras, "we are judges, and not assassins."

Then he called Gavroche.

"You be off now and do what I told you."

"I am off," Gavroche cried, but stopped just as he reached the door.

"By the way, you will give me his gun. I leave you the musician but I want his clarionette."

The gamin gave a military salute, and gaily slipped round the large barricade.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE tragical picture we have undertaken would not be complete, the reader would not see in their exact and real relief those great moments of social lying-in and revolutionary

giving birth, in which there are throes blended with effort, if we were to omit in our sketch an incident full of an epic and stern horror, which occurred almost immediately after Gavroche's departure.

Bands of rioters, it is well known, resemble a snowball, and, as they roll along, agglomerate many tumultuous men, who do not ask each other whence they come. Among the passers-by who joined the band led by Enjolras, Combeferre, and Courfeyrac, there was a man wearing a porter's jacket, much worn at the shoulders, who gesticulated and vociferated, and had the appearance of a drunken savage. This man, whose name or nickname was Le Cabuc, and entirely unknown to those who pretended to know him, was seated, in a state of real or feigned intoxication, with four others, round a table which they had dragged out of the wine-shop. This Cabuc, while making the others drink, seemed to be gazing thoughtfully at the large house behind the barricade, whose five storeys commanded the whole street, and faced the Rue St Denis. All at once he exclaimed,—

“Do you know what, comrades? we must fire from that house. When we are at the windows, hang me if any one can come up the street.”

“Yes, but the house is closed,” said one of the drinkers.

“We'll knock.”

“They won't open.”

“Then we'll break in the door.”

Le Cabuc ran up to the door, which had a very massive knocker, and rapped; as the door was not opened he rapped again, and no one answering, he gave a third rap, but the silence continued.

“Is there any one in here?” Le Cabuc shouted. But nothing stirred, and so he seized a musket and began hammering the door with the butt end. It was an old, low, narrow, solid door, made of oak, lined with sheet iron inside and a heavy bar, and a thorough postern gate. The blows made the whole house tremble, but did not shake the door. The inhabitants, however, were probably alarmed, for a little square trap-window was at length lit up and opened on the third storey, and a candle and the grey-haired head of a terrified old man, who was the porter, appeared in the orifice. The man who was knocking left off.

“What do you want, gentlemen?” the porter asked.

“Open the door!” said Le Cabuc.

“I cannot, gentlemen.”

"Open, I tell you!"

"It is impossible, gentlemen."

Le Cabuc raised his musket and took aim at the porter, but as he was below and it was very dark the porter did not notice the fact.

"Will you open? yes or no?"

"No, gentlemen."

"You really mean it?"

"I say no, my kind—"

The porter did not finish the sentence, for the musket was fired; the bullet entered under his chin and came out of his neck, after passing through the jugular vein. The old man fell in a heap, without heaving a sigh, the candle went out, and nothing was visible save a motionless head lying on the sill of the window, and a small wreath of smoke ascending to the roof.

"There," said Le Cabuc, as he let the butt of the musket fall on the pavement again.

He had scarce uttered the word ere he felt a hand laid on his shoulder with the tenacity of an eagle's talon, and he heard a voice saying to him,—

"On your knees!"

The murderer turned, and saw before him Enjolras' white, cold face. Enjolras held a pistol in his hand, and had hurried up on hearing the shot fired, and clutched with his left hand Le Cabuc's blouse, shirt, and braces.

"On your knees," he repeated.

And with a sovereign movement the frail young man of twenty bent like a reed the muscular and robust porter, and forced him to kneel in the mud. Le Cabuc tried to resist, but he seemed to have been seized by a superhuman hand. Enjolras, pale, bare-neck, with his dishevelled hair and feminine face, had at this moment I know not what of the ancient Themis. His dilated nostrils, his downcast eyes, gave to his implacable Greek profile that expression of wrath and that expression of chastity which, in the opinion of the old world, are becoming to justice. All the insurgents had hurried up, and then ranged themselves in a circle at a distance, feeling that it was impossible for them to utter a word in the presence of what they were going to see. Le Cabuc, conquered, no longer attempted to struggle, and trembled all over: Enjolras loosed his grasp, and took out his watch.

"Pray or think!" he said, "you have one minute to do so."

"Mercy!" the murderer stammered, then hung his head and muttered a few inarticulate execrations.

Enjolras did not take his eyes off the watch; he let the

minute pass, and then put the watch again in his fob. This done, he seized Le Cabuc by the hair, who clung to his knees with a yell, and placed the muzzle of the pistol to his ear. Many of these intrepid men, who had so tranquilly entered upon the most frightful of adventures, turned away their heads. The explosion was heard, the assassin fell on his head on the pavement, and Enjolras drew himself up, and looked round him with a stern air of conviction. Then he kicked the corpse and said,—

“Throw this outside.”

Three men raised the body of the wretch, which was still writhing in the last mechanical convulsions of expiring life, and threw it over the small barricade into the Mondétour lane. Enjolras stood pensive; some grand darkness was slowly spreading over his formidable serenity. Presently he raised his voice, and all were silent.

“Citizens,” said Enjolras, “what that man did is frightful, and what I have done is horrible; he killed, and that is why I killed, and I was obliged to do so, as insurrection must have its discipline. Assassination is even more of a crime here than elsewhere, for we stand under the eye of the Revolution, we are the priests of the Republic, we are the sacred victims to duty, and we must not do aught that would calumniate our combat. I, therefore, tried and condemned this man to death; for my part, constrained to do what I have done, but abhorring it, I have also tried myself, and you will shortly see what sentence I have passed.”

All who listened trembled.

“We will share your fate,” Combeferre exclaimed.

“Be it so!” Enjolras continued. “One word more. In executing that man I obeyed Necessity; but Necessity is a monster of the old world, and its true name is Fatality. Now it is the law of progress that monsters should disappear before angels, and Fatality vanish before Fraternity. It is a bad moment to utter the word love, but no matter, I utter it, and I glorify it. Love, thou hast a future; Death, I make use of thee, but I abhor thee. Citizens, in the future there will be no darkness, no thunder-claps; neither ferocious ignorance, nor bloodthirsty retaliation; and as there will be no Satan left, there will be no St Michael. In the future no man will kill another man, the earth will be radiant, and the human race will love. The day will come, citizens, when all will be concord, harmony, light, joy, and life, and we are going to die in order that it may come.”

Enjolras was silent, his virgin lips closed, and he stood for

some time at the spot where he had shed blood, in the motionlessness of a marble statue. His fixed eyes caused people to talk in whispers around him. Jean Prouvaire and Combeferre shook their heads silently, and leaning against each other in an angle of the barricade, gazed, with an admiration in which there was compassion, at this grave young man, who was an executioner and priest, and had at the same time the light and the hardness of crystal. Let us say at once, that after the action, when the corpses were conveyed to the Morgue and searched, a police-agent's card was found on Le Cabuc ; the author of this work had in his hands in 1848 the special report on this subject made to the Prefect of Police in 1832. Let us add that, if we may believe a strange but probably well-founded police tradition, Le Cabuc was Claqueusous. It is certainly true that after the death of Cabuc Claqueusous was never heard of again, and left no trace of his disappearance. He seemed to have become amalgamated with the invisible ; his life had been gloom, and his end was night. The whole insurgent band were still suffering from the emotion of this tragical trial, so quickly begun and so quickly ended, when Courfeyrac saw again at the barricade the short young man who had come to his lodgings to ask for Marius ; this lad, who had a bold and reckless look, had come at night to rejoin the insurgents.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FROM THE RUE PLUMET TO THE RUE ST DENIS.

THE voice which summoned Marius through the twilight to the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrerie had produced on him the effect of the voice of destiny. He wished to die, and the opportunity offered ; he rapped at the door of the tomb, and a hand held out the key to him from the shadows. Such gloomy openings in the darkness just in front of despair are tempting ; Marius removed the bar which had so often allowed him to pass, left the garden, and said, "I will go." Mad with grief, feeling nothing fixed and solid in his brain, incapable of accepting anything henceforth of destiny, after the two months spent in the intoxication of youth and love, and crushed by all the reveries of despair at once, he had only one wish left,—to finish with it all at once. He began walking rapidly, and he

happened to be armed, as he had Javert's pistols in his pocket. The young man whom he fancied that he had seen had got out of his sight in the streets.

Marius, who left the Rue Plumet by the boulevard, crossed the esplanade and bridge of the Invalides, the Champs Elysées, the square of Louis XV., and reached the Rue de Rivoli. The shops were open there, the gas blazed under the arcades, ladies were making purchases, and people were eating ices at the Café Laiter and cakes at the English pastrycook's. A few post-chaises, however, were leaving at a gallop the Hotel des Princes and Meurice's. Marius entered the Rue St Honoré by the passage Delorme. The shops were closed there, the tradesmen were conversing before their open doors, people walked along, the lamps were lighted, and from the first-floor upwards the houses were illuminated as usual. Cavalry were stationed on the square of the Palais Royal. Marius followed the Rue St Honoré, and the further he got from the Palais Royal the fewer windows were lit up; the shops were entirely closed, nobody was conversing on the thresholds, the street grew darker, and at the same time the crowd denser, for the passers-by had now become a crowd. No one could be heard speaking in the crowd, and yet a hollow, deep buzzing issued from it. Near the Arbre sec Fountain there were mobs motionless, and sombre groups standing among the comers and goers like stones in the middle of a running stream. At the entrance of the Rue des Prouvaires, the crowd no longer moved, it was a resisting, solid, compact, almost impenetrable mob of persons packed together and conversing in a low voice. There were hardly any black coats or round hats present, only fustian jackets, blouses, caps, and bristling beards. This multitude undulated confusedly in the night mist, and its whispering had the hoarse accent of a rustling, and though no one moved, a tramping in the mud could be heard. Beyond this dense crowd there was not a window lit up in the surrounding streets, and the solitary and decreasing rows of lanterns could only be seen in them. The street-lanterns of that day resembled large red stars suspended from ropes, and cast on to the pavement a shadow which had the shape of a large spider. These streets, however, were not deserted, and piled muskets, moving bayonets, and troops bivouacking could be distinguished in them. No curious person went beyond this limit, and circulation ceased there; there the mob ended and the army began.

Marius wished with the will of a man who no longer hopes; he had been summoned and was bound to go. He found means to traverse the crowd and bivouacking troops; he hid himself

from the patrols and avoided the sentries. He made a circuit, came to the Rue de Béthisy, and proceeded in the direction of the Halles ; at the corner of the Rue des Bourdonnais the lanterns ceased. After crossing the zone of the mob he passed the border of troops, and now found himself in something frightful. There was not a wayfarer, nor a soldier, nor a light, nothing but solitude, silence, and night, and a strangely-piercing cold ; entering a street was like entering a cellar. Still he continued to advance ; some one ran close past him ; was it a man ? a woman ? were there more than one ? He could not have said, for it had passed and vanished. By constant circuits he reached a lane, which he judged to be the Rue de la Poterie, and toward the middle of that lane came across an obstacle. He stretched out his hands and found that it was an overturned cart, and his feet recognized pools of water, holes, scattered and piled-up paving-stones—it was a barricade which had been begun and then abandoned. He clambered over the stones and soon found himself on the other side of the obstacle ; he walked very close to the posts, and felt his way along the house walls. A little beyond the barricade he fancied that he could see something white before him, and on drawing nearer it assumed a form. It was a pair of white horses, the omnibus horses unharnessed by Bossuet in the morning, which had wandered, hap-hazard, from street to street all day, and at last stopped here, with the stolid patience of animals which no more comprehend the actions of man than man comprehends the actions of Providence. Marius left the horses behind him, and as he entered a street which seemed to be the Rue du Contrat-social, a musket-shot, which came no one could say whence, and traversed the darkness at hazard, whizzed close past him, and pierced above his head a copper shaving-dish, hanging from a hair-dresser's shop. In 1846, this dish with the hole in it was still visible at the corner of the pillars of the Halles. This shot was still life, but from this moment nothing further occurred ; the whole itinerary resembled a descent down black steps, but for all that Marius did not the less advance.

Any being hovering over Paris at this moment, with the wings of a bat or an owl, would have had a gloomy spectacle under his eyes. The entire old district of the Halles, which is like a city within a city, which is traversed by the Rues St Denis and St Martin, and by a thousand lanes which the insurgents had converted into their redoubt and arsenal, would have appeared like an enormous black hole dug in the centre of Paris. Here the eye settled on an abyss, and, owing to the broken lamps and the closed shutters, all brilliancy, life, noise,

and movement had ceased in it. The invisible police of the revolt were watching everywhere and maintaining order, that is to say, night. To hide the small number in a vast obscurity, and to multiply each combatant by the possibilities which this obscurity contains, is the necessary tactics of the insurrection, and at nightfall every window in which a candle gleamed received a bullet ; the light was extinguished, and sometimes the occupant killed. Hence, nothing stirred ; there was nought but terror, mourning, and stupor in the houses, and in the streets a sort of sacred horror. Not even the long rows of windows and floors, the net-work of chimneys and roofs, and the vague reflections which glisten on the muddy and damp pavement, could be perceived. The eye which had looked down from above on this mass of shadow might perhaps have noticed here and there indistinct gleams, which made the broken and strange lines, and the profile of singular buildings, stand out, something like flashes flitting through ruins—at such spots were the barricades. The rest was a lake of darkness and mystery, oppressive and funereal, above which motionless and mournful outlines rose, the Tower of St Jacques, St Merry church, and two or three other of those grand edifices of which man makes giants and night phantoms. All around this deserted and alarming labyrinth, in those districts where the circulation of Paris was not stopped, and where a few lamps glistened, the aerial observer would have distinguished the metallic scintillation of bayonets, the dull rolling of artillery, and the buzz of silent battalions which was augmented every moment—it was a formidable belt, slowly contracting and closing in on the revolt.

The invested district was now but a species of monstrous cavern, everything seemed there asleep or motionless, and, as we have seen, each of the streets by which it could be approached only offered darkness. It was a stern darkness, full of snares, full of unknown and formidable collisions, into which it was terrifying to penetrate, and horrible to remain, where those who entered shuddered before those who awaited them, and those who awaited shuddered before those who were about to come. Invisible combatants were entrenched at the corner of every street, like sepulchral traps hidden in the thickness of the night. It was all over,—no other light could be hoped for there henceforth save the flash of musketry, no other meeting than the sudden and rapid apparition of death. Where ? how ? when ? they did not know, but it was certain and inevitable : there, as the spot marked out for the contest, the Government and the insurrection, the National Guards

and the popular society, the bourgeoisie and the rioters, were about to grope their way toward each other. There was the same necessity for both sides, and the only issue henceforth possible was to be killed or conquer. It was such an extreme situation, such a powerful obscurity, that the most timid felt resolute and the most daring terrified. On both sides, however, there was equal fury, obstinacy, and determination ; on one side advancing was death, and no one dreamed of recoiling ; on the other remaining was death, and no one thought of flying. It was necessary that all should be over by the morrow, that the victory should be with one side or the other, and the insurrection either become a revolution or a riot. The Government understood this as well as the partisans, and the smallest tradesman felt it. Hence came an agonizing thought with the impenetrable gloom of this district, where all was about to be decided ; hence came a redoubled anxiety around this silence, whence a catastrophe was going to issue. Only one sound could be heard, a sound as heart-rending as a death-rattle, and as menacing as a malediction, the tocsin of St Merry. Nothing could be so chilling as the clamour of this distracted and despairing bell, as it lamented in the darkness.

As often happens, nature seemed to have come to an understanding with what men were going to do, and nothing deranged the mournful harmonies of the whole scene. The stars had disappeared, and heavy clouds filled the entire horizon with their melancholy masses. There was a black sky over these dead streets, as if an intense pall were cast over the immense tomb. While a thoroughly political battle was preparing on the same site which had already witnessed so many revolutionary events,—while the youth, the secret associations, and the schools, in the name of principles, and the middle classes in the name of interests, were coming together to try a final fall,—while everybody was hurrying up and appealing to the last and decisive hour of the crisis, in the distance and beyond that fatal district, at the lowest depths of the unfathomable cavities of that old wretched Paris, which is disappearing under the splendour of happy and opulent Paris, the gloomy voice of the people could be heard hoarsely growling. It is a startling and sacred voice, composed of the yell of the brute and the word of God, which terrifies the weak and warns the wise, and which at once comes from below like the voice of the lion, and from above like the voice of thunder.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE EXTREME BRINK.

MARIUS had reached the Halles ; there all was calmer, darker, and even more motionless than in the neighbouring streets. It seemed as if the frozen peace of the tomb had issued from the ground and spread over the sky. A ruddy tinge, however, brought out from the black back-ground the tall roofs of the houses which barred the Rue de la Chanvrerie on the side of St Eustache. It was the reflection of the torch burning on the Corinth barricade, and Marius walked toward that ruddy hue ; it led him to the Marché-aux-Poirées, and he caught a glimpse of the Rue des Prêcheurs, into which he turned. The sentry of the insurgents watching at the other end did not notice him ; he felt himself quite close to what he was seeking, and he walked on tip-toe. He thus reached the corner of that short piece of the Mondétour lane which was, as will be remembered, the sole communication which Enjolras had maintained with the outer world. At the corner of the last house on his left, he stopped and peeped into the lane. A little beyond the dark corner formed by the lane and the Rue de la Chanvrerie, which formed a large patch of shadow, in which he was himself buried, he noticed a little light on the pavement, a portion of a wine-shop, a lamp flickering in a sort of shapeless niche, and men crouching down with guns on their knees,—all this was scarce ten yards from him, and was the interior of the barricade. The houses that lined the right-hand side of the lane hid from him the rest of the wine-shop, the large barricade, and the flag. Marius had but one step to take, and then the unhappy young man sat down on a post, folded his arms, and thought of his father.

He thought of that heroic Colonel Pontmercy, who had been such a proud soldier, who had defended under the Republic the frontier of France, and touched under the Empire the frontier of Asia ; who had seen Genoa, Alessandria, Milan, Turin, Madrid, Vienna, Dresden, Berlin, and Moscow ; who had left on all the victorious battle-fields of Europe drops of the same blood which Marius had in his veins ; who had grown grey before age in discipline and command ; who had lived with his waist-belt buckled, his epaulettes falling on his chest, his cockade blackened by smoke, his brow wrinkled by his

helmet, in barracks, in camp, in bivouacs, and in hospitals, and who, at the expiration of twenty years, had returned from the great wars with his scarred cheek and smiling face, simple, tranquil, admirable, pure as an infant, having done everything for France, and nothing against her. He said to himself that his own day had now arrived, that his hour had at length struck, that after his father he too was going to be brave, intrepid, and bold, to rush to meet bullets, offer his chest to the bayonets, shed his blood, seek the enemy, seek death; that he in his turn was about to wage war and go into the battle-field, and that the battle he would enter was the street, and the war he was about to wage civil war! He saw civil war opening like a gulf before him, and that he was going to fall into it; then he shuddered.

He thought of his father's sword, which his grandfather had sold to the old clothes-dealer, and which he had so painfully regretted. He said to himself that this valiant and chaste sword had done well to escape from him, and disappear angrily in the darkness; that it fled away thus because it was intelligent, and foresaw the future,—the riots, the war of gutters, the war of paving-stones, fusillades from cellar-traps, and blows dealt and received from behind; that, coming from Marengo and Austerlitz, it was unwilling to go to the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and after what it had done with the father refused to do that with the son! He said to himself that if that sword had been here, if, after receiving it at his dead father's bed-side, he had dared to take it, and carry it into this nocturnal combat between Frenchmen in the streets, it would assuredly have burned his hands, and have flashed before him like the glaive of the archangel! He said to himself that it was fortunate it was not there, but had disappeared,—that this was well, this was just, that his grandfather had been the true guardian of his father's glory, and that it was better for the Colonel's sword to have been put up to auction, sold to the second-hand dealer, or broken up as old iron, than come to-day to make the flank of the country bleed. And then he began weeping bitterly. It was horrible, but what was he to do? he could not live without Cosette, and since she had departed all left him was to die. Had he not pledged her his word of honour that he would die? She had gone away knowing this, and it was plain that she was pleased with Marius' dying; and then it was clear that she no longer loved him, since she had gone away thus without warning him, without a word, without a letter, and yet she knew his address! Of what use was it to live? and why should he live now? And then, to have come so

far and then recoil! to have approached the danger and run away! to have come to look at the barricade and then slip off! to slip off, trembling and saying, "After all I have had enough of that. I have seen it, that is sufficient, it is civil war, and I will be off!" To abandon his friends who expected him, who perhaps had need of him, who were a handful against an army! To be false to everything at once,—to love, to friendship, to his word! to give his poltroonery the pretext of patriotism! Oh, that was impossible, and if his father's phantom were there in the shadows, and saw him recoil, it would lash him with the flat of its sabre, and cry to him, "Forward, coward!"

A prey to this oscillation of his thoughts, he hung his head, but suddenly raised it again, for a species of splendid rectification had just taken place in his mind. There is a dilatation of thought peculiar to the vicinity of the tomb; and to be near death makes a man see correctly. The vision of the action upon which he saw himself perhaps on the point of entering no longer appeared to him lamentable, but superb; the street was become transfigured by some internal labour of the soul before his mental eye. All the tumultuous notes of interrogation of reverie crowded back upon him, but without troubling him, and he did not leave a single one unanswered. Why would his father be indignant? are there not cases in which insurrection attains to the dignity of duty? what was there degrading for the son of Colonel Pontmercy in the combat which was about to commence? It is no longer Montmirail or Champaubert, it is something else; it is no longer a question of a sacred territory, but of a holy idea. The country complains; be it so, but humanity applauds. Is it true, besides, that the country complains? France bleeds, but liberty smiles, and on seeing the smile of liberty France forgets her wound. And then, regarding things from a higher point still, what did people mean by talking of a civil war?

What is the meaning of civil war? is there such a thing as a foreign war? Is not every war between men a war between brothers? War can only be qualified by its object, and there is neither foreign war nor civil war, there is only just or unjust war. Up to the day when the great human concordat is concluded, war, at least that which is the effort of the hurrying future against the laggard past, may be necessary. What reproach can be urged against such a war? war does not become a disgrace, or the sword a dagger, until it assassinates right, progress, reason, civilization, and truth. In such a case, whether civil war or foreign war, it is iniquitous, and is called crime. Beyond that holy thing justice, what right would one

form of war have to despise another! by what right would the sword of Washington ignore the pike of Camille Desmoulins? Which is the greater, Leonidas contending against the foreigner or Timoleon against the tyrant? one is the defender, the other is the liberator. Must we brand, without investigating the object, every taking up of arms in the interior of a city? if so, mark with contumely Brutus, Marcel, Arnould of Blankenheim, and Coligny. A war of thickets? a street war? why not? such was the war of Ambiorix, of Artevelde, of Marnix, and Pelagius. But Ambiorix struggled against Rome, Artevelde against France, Marnix against Spain, and Pelagius against the Moors,—all against the foreigner. Well, monarchy is the foreigner, oppression is the foreigner, divine right is the foreigner, and despotism violates the moral frontier as invasion does the geographical frontier. Expelling the tyrant or expelling the English is, in either case, a reconquest of territory. An hour arrives when a protest is insufficient; after philosophy action is needed, living strength completes what the idea has sketched out: Prometheus vincetus begins, Aristogiton ends, the Encyclopedia enlightens minds, and August 10 electrifies them. After Æschylus, Thrasybulus; after Diderot, Danton. Multitudes have a tendency to accept the master, and their mass deposits apathy. A crowd is easily led into habits of obedience. These must be stirred up, impelled, and roughly treated by the very blessing of their deliverance, their eyes be hurt by the truth, and light hurled at them in terrible handfuls. They must themselves be to some extent thunderstruck by their own salvation, for such a dazzling awakes them. Hence comes the necessity of tocsins and wars; it is necessary that great combatants should rise, illumine nations by audacity, and shake up that sorry humanity over which divine right, Cæsarian glory, strength, fanaticism, irresponsible power, and absolute majesties cast a shadow,—a mob stupidly occupied in contemplating these gloomy triumphs of the night in their crepuscular splendour. But what? whom are you talking of? do you call Louis Philippe the tyrant? no, no more than Louis XVI. These are both what history is accustomed to call good kings, but principles cannot be broken up, the logic of truth is rectilinear, and its peculiarity to be deficient in complaining; no concession therefore; every encroachment on man, must be repressed: there is the right divine in Louis XVI., there is the "because a Bourbon" in Louis Philippe; both represent to a certain extent the confiscation of right, and they must be combated in order to sweep away universal usurpation; it must be so, for France is always the one who begins, and when the master falls in France he falls everywhere. In

a word, what cause is more just, and consequently what war is greater, than to re-establish social truth, give back its throne to liberty, restore the people to the people and the sovereignty to man, to replace the crown on the head of France, to restore reason and equity in their plenitude, to suppress every germ of antagonism by giving back individuality, to annihilate the obstacle which the royalty offers to the immense human concord, and to place the human race once again on a level with right? Such wars construct peace. An enormous fortalice of prejudice, privileges, superstitions, falsehoods, exactions, abuses, violences, iniquities, and darknesses, is still standing on the earth with its towers of hatred, and it must be thrown down, and the monstrous mass crumble away. To conquer at Austerlitz is great, but to take the Bastille is immense.

No one but will have noticed in himself that the mind—and this is the marvel of its unity complicated with ubiquity—has the strange aptitude of reasoning almost coldly in the most violent extremities, and it often happens that weird passions and deep despair, in the very agony of their blackest soliloquies, handle subjects and discuss theses. Logic is mingled with the convulsion, and the thread of syllogism runs without breaking through the storm of the thoughts:—such was Marius' state of mind. While thinking thus, crushed, but resolute, and yet hesitating and shuddering at what he was going to do, his eyes wandered about the interior of the barricade. The insurgents were conversing in whispers, without moving, and that almost silence which marks the last phase of expectation was perceptible. Above them at a third-floor window, Marius distinguished a species of spectator or of witness, who seemed singularly attentive,—it was the porter killed by Le Cabuc. From below this head could be vaguely perceived in the reflection of the torch burning on the barricade, and nothing was stranger in this dense and vacillating light than this motionless, livid, and amazed face, with its bristling hair, open and fixed eyes and gaping mouth, bending over the street in an attitude of curiosity. It might be said that this dead man was contemplating those who were going to die. A long stream of blood which had flowed from his head, descended from the window to the first floor, where it stopped.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE FLAG.

NOTHING came yet: it had struck ten by St Merry's, and Enjolras and Combeferre were sitting musket in hand near the sally port of the great barricade. They did not speak, but were listening, trying to catch the dullest and most remote sound of marching. Suddenly, in the midst of this lugubrious calm, a clear, young, gay voice, which seemed to come from the Rue St Denis, burst forth, and began singing distinctly, to the old popular tune of *Au clair de la lune*, these lines, terminating with a cry that resembled a cock-crow.

Mon nez est en larmes,
Mon ami Bugeaud,
Prêt-moi tes gendarmes
Pour leur dire un mot.
En capote bleue,
La poule au shako,
Voici la banlieue !
Co-cocorico !

They shook hands.

“ ‘Tis Gavroche,” said Enjolras.

“ He is warning us,” said Combeferre.

Hurried footsteps troubled the deserted streets, and a being more active than a clown was seen climbing over the omnibus, and Gavroche leaped into the square, out of breath, and saying,—

“ My gun ! here they are.”

An electric shudder ran along the whole barricade, and the movement of hands seeking guns was heard.

“ Will you have my carbine ?” Enjolras asked the gamin.

“ I want the big gun,” Gavroche answered, and took Javert’s musket.

Two sentries had fallen back and come in almost simultaneously with Gavroche; they were those from the end of the street and the Petite Truanderie. The vedette in the lane des Prêcheurs remained at his post, which indicated that nothing was coming from the direction of the bridges and the Halles. The Rue de la Chanvrerie, in which a few paving-stones were scarce visible in the reflection of the light cast on the flag, offered to the insurgents the aspect of a large black gate vaguely opened in a cloud of smoke. Every man

proceeded to his post: forty-three insurgents, among whom were Enjolras, Combeferre, Courfeyrac, Bossuet, Joly, Bahorel, and Gavroche, knelt behind the great barricade, with the muzzles of their guns and carbines thrust out between the paving-stones as through loop-holes, attentive, silent, and ready to fire. Six, commanded by Feuilly, installed themselves at the upper windows of Corinth. Some minutes more elapsed, and then a measured, heavy tramp of many feet was distinctly heard from the direction of St Leu; this noise, at first faint, then precise, and then heavy and re-echoing, approached slowly, without halt or interruption, and with a tranquil and terrible continuity. Nothing was audible but this; it was at once the silence and noise of the statue of the commendatore, but the stormy footfall had something enormous and multiple about it, which aroused the idea of a multitude at the same time as that of a spectre; you might have fancied that you heard the fearful statue Legion on the march. The tramp came nearer, nearer still, and then ceased; and the breathing of many men seemed to be audible at the end of the street. Nothing, however, was visible, though quite at the end in the thick gloom could be distinguished a multitude of metallic threads, fine as needles and almost imperceptible, which moved about like that indescribable phosphoric network which we perceive under our closed eyelids just at the moment when we are falling asleep. These were bayonets and musket barrels on which the reflection of the torch confusedly fell. There was another pause, as if both sides were waiting. All at once a voice which was the more sinister because no one could be seen, and it seemed as if the darkness itself was speaking, shouted,—

“Who goes there?”

At the same time the click of muskets being cocked could be heard. Enjolras replied with a sonorous and haughty accent,—

“The French Revolution!”

“Fire!” the voice commanded.

A flash lit up all the frontages in the street, as if the door of a furnace had been suddenly opened and shut, and a frightful shower of bullets hurled against the barricade, and the flag fell. The discharge had been so violent and dense that it cut the staff asunder, that is to say, the extreme point of the omnibus pole. Bullets ricochetting from the corners of the houses, penetrated the barricade, and wounded several men. The impression produced by this first discharge was chilling; the attack was rude, and of a nature to make the boldest think. It was plain that they had to do with a whole regiment at the least.

"Comrades," Courfeyrac cried, "let us not waste our powder, but wait till they have entered the street before returning their fire."

"And before all," Enjolras said, "let us hoist the flag again!"

He picked up the flag, which had fallen at his feet: outside the ring of ramrods in barrels could be heard,—the troops were re-loading. Enjolras continued,—

"Who has a brave heart among us? who will plant the flag on the barricade again?"

Not one replied, for to mount the barricade at this moment, when all the guns were doubtless again aimed at it, was simply death, and the bravest man hesitates to condemn himself. Enjolras even shuddered as he repeated,—

"Will no one offer?"

Since the arrival at Corinth and the barricade had been begun no one paid any further attention to Father Mabœuf. M. Mabœuf, however, had not quitted the insurgents: he had gone into the ground-floor room of the wine-shop and seated himself behind the bar, where he was, so to speak, annihilated in himself. He seemed no longer to see or think. Courfeyrac and others had twice or thrice accosted him, warning him of the peril and begging him to withdraw, but he had not appeared to hear them. When no one was speaking to him his lips moved as if he were answering some one, and so soon as people addressed him, his lips left off moving, and his eyes no longer seemed alive. A few hours before the barricade was attacked he had assumed a posture which he had not quitted since, with his two hands on his knees, and his head bent forward, as if he were looking into a precipice. Nothing could have drawn him out of this attitude, and it did not appear as if his mind were in the barricade. When every one else went to his post the only persons left in the room were Javert tied to the post, an insurgent with drawn sabre watching over Javert, and Mabœuf. At the moment of the attack, at the detonation, the physical shock affected and as it were awoke him: he suddenly rose, crossed the room, and at the moment when Enjolras repeated his appeal, "Does no one offer?" the old man was seen on the threshold of the wine-shop. His presence produced a species of commotion in the groups, and the cry was raised,—

"It is the voter, the conventionalist, the representative of the people!"

He probably did not hear it: he walked straight up to Enjolras, the insurgents making way for him with a religious fear, tore the flag from Enjolras, who recoiled with petrifaction,

and then, no one daring to arrest or help him, this old man of eighty, with shaking head, but firm step, slowly began ascending the staircase of paving-stones formed inside the barricade. This was so gloomy and so grand that all around him cried "Off with your hats." With each step he ascended the scene became more frightful, his white hair, his decrepit face, his tall, bald, and wrinkled forehead, his hollow eyes, his amazed and open mouth, and his old arm raising the red banner, stood out from the darkness and were magnified in the sanguinary brightness of the torch, and the spectators fancied they saw the spectre of '93 issuing from the ground, holding the flag of terror in its hand. When he was on the last step, when this trembling and terrible phantom, standing on the pile of ruins, in the presence of twelve hundred invisible gun-barrels, stood facing death, and as if stronger than it, the whole barricade assumed a supernatural and colossal aspect in the darkness. There was one of those silences which only occur at the sight of prodigies, and in the midst of this silence the old man brandished the red flag and cried,—

"Long live the revolution! long live the republic! fraternity! equality! and death!"

A low and quick talking, like the murmur of a hurried priest galloping through a mass, was heard,—it was probably the police commissary making the legal summons at the other end of the street; then the same loud voice which had shouted "Who goes there" cried,—

"Withdraw!"

M. Mabœuf, livid, haggard, with his eye-balls illumined by the mournful flames of mania, raised the flag about his head and repeated,—

"Long live the republic."

"Fire!" the voice commanded.

A second discharge, resembling a round of grape-shot, burst against the barricade; the old man sank on his knees, then rose again, let the flag slip from his hand, and fell back on the pavement like a log, with his arms stretched out like a cross. Streams of blood flowed under him, and his old, pale, melancholy face seemed to be gazing at heaven. One of those emotions stronger than man, which makes him forget self-defence, seized on the insurgents, and they approached the corpse with respectful horror.

"What men these regicides are!" said Enjolras.

Courfeyrac whispered in Enjolras' ear,—

"This is only between ourselves, as I do not wish to diminish the enthusiasm, but this man was anything rather than a regicide. I knew him, and his name was Mabœuf. I do not know

what was the matter with him to-day, but he was a brave idiot. Look at his head."

"The head of an idiot and the heart of Brutus!" Enjolras replied, then he raised his voice.

"Citizens! such is the example which the old give to the young. We hesitated and he came; we recoiled and he advanced. This is what those who tremble with old age teach those who tremble with fear! This aged man is august before his country; he has had a long life and a magnificent death! Now let us place his corpse under cover, let each of us defend this dead old man as he would defend his living father, and let his presence in the midst of us render the barricade impregnable!"

A murmur of gloomy and energetic adhesion followed these words. Enjolras bent down, raised the old man's head, and sternly kissed him on the forehead; then, stretching out his arms and handling the dead man with tender caution, as if afraid of hurting him, he took off his coat, pointed to the blood-stained holes, and said,—

"This is our flag now!"

A long black shawl of Widow Hucheloup's was thrown over Father Mabœuf: six men made a litter of their muskets, the corpse was laid on them, and they carried it with bare heads and solemn slowness to a large table in the ground-floor room. These men, entirely engaged with the grave and sacred thing they were doing, did not think of the perilous situation in which they were, and when the corpse was carried past the stoical Javert, Enjolras said to the spy,—

"Your turn will come soon."

During this period little Gavroche, who alone had not left his post, and had remained on the watch, fancied he could see men creeping up to the barricade: all at once he cried, "Look out!" Courfeyrac, Enjolras, Jean Prouvaire, Combeferre, Joly, Bahorel, and Bossuet, all hurried tumultuously out of the wine-shop, but it was almost too late; for they saw a flashing line of bayonets undulating on the crest of the barricade. Municipal Guards of tall stature penetrated, some by striding over the omnibus, others through the sally port, driving before them the gamin, who fell back, but did not fly. The moment was critical; it was that first formidable minute of inundation when the river rises to the level of the dam and the water begins to filter through the fissures of the dyke. One second more and the barricade was captured. Bahorel dashed at the first municipal guard who entered, and killed him with a shot from his carbine; the second killed Bahorel with a bayonet-thrust.

Another had already levelled Courfeyrac, who was shouting Help! while the tallest of all of them, a species of Colossus, was marching upon Gavroche, with his bayonet at the charge. The gamin raised in his little arms Javert's enormous musket, resolutely aimed at the giant, and pulled the trigger. But the gun did not go off, as Javert had not loaded it : the Municipal Guard burst into a laugh, and advanced upon the lad. Before the bayonet had reached Gavroche, however, the musket fell from the soldier's hands, for a bullet struck him in the middle of the forehead, and he fell on his back. A second bullet struck the other guard, who had attacked Courfeyrac, in the middle of the chest, and laid him low.

The shots were fired by Marius who had just entered the barricade.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE BARREL OF GUNPOWDER.

MARIUS, still concealed at the corner of the Rue Mondétour, had watched the first phase of the combat with shuddering irresolution. Still he was unable to resist for any length of time that mysterious and sovereign dizziness which might be called the appeal from the abyss : and at the sight of the imminence of the peril, of M. Mabœuf's death, that mournful enigma, Bahorel killed, Courfeyrac shouting for help, this child menaced, and his friends to succour or revenge, all hesitation vanished, and he rushed into the medley, pistols in hand. With the first shot he saved Gavroche, and with the second delivered Courfeyrac. On hearing the shots, and the cries of the guards, the assailants swarmed up the entrenchment, over the crest of which could now be seen more than half the bodies of Municipal Guards, troops of the line, and National Guards from the suburbs, musket in hand. They already covered more than two-thirds of the barricade, but no longer leapt down into the enclosure, and hesitated, as if they feared some snare. They looked down into the gloomy space as they would have peered into a lion's den ; and the light of the torch only illumined bayonets, bearskin shakos, and anxious and irritated faces.

Marius had no longer a weapon, as he had thrown away his dis-

charged pistols, but he had noticed the barrel of gunpowder near the door of the ground-floor room. As he half turned to look in that direction a soldier levelled his musket at him, and at the moment when the soldier was taking steady aim at Marius, a hand was laid on the muzzle of his musket and stopped it up; the young workman in the velvet trousers had rushed forward. The shot was fired, the bullet passed through the hand, and probably through the workman, for he fell, but did not hit Marius. Marius, who was entering the wine-shop, hardly noticed this; still he had confusedly seen the gun pointed at him, and the hand laid on the muzzle, and had heard the explosion. But in minutes like this things that men see vacillate, and they do not dwell on anything, for they feel themselves obscurely impelled toward deeper shadows still, and all is mist. The insurgents, surprised but not terrified, had rallied, and Enjolras cried, "Wait, do not throw away your shots!" and, in truth, in the first moment of confusion they might wound each other. The majority had gone up to the first-floor and attic windows, whence they commanded the assailants, but the more determined, with Enjolras, Courfeyrac, Jean Prouvaire, and Combeferre, were haughtily standing against the houses at the end, unprotected, and facing the lines of soldiers and guards who crowned the barricade. All this was done without precipitation, and with that strange and menacing gravity which precedes a combat; on both sides men were aiming at each other within point-blank range, and they were so near that they could converse. When they were at the point where the spark was about to shoot forth, an officer wearing a gorget and heavy epaulettes stretched out his sword and said,—

"Throw down your arms!"

"Fire!" Enjolras commanded.

The two detonations took place at the same moment, and everything disappeared in smoke, a sharp and stifling smoke, in which the dying and the wounded writhed, with faint and hollow groans. When the smoke dispersed, the two lines of combatants could be seen thinned, but at the same spot, and silently reloading their guns. All at once a thundering voice was heard shouting,—

"Begone, or I will blow up the barricade!"

All turned to the quarter whence the voice came.

Marius had entered the wine-shop, fetched the barrel of gunpowder, and then, taking advantage of the smoke and obscure mist which filled the entrenched space, glided along the barricade up to the cage of paving-stones in which the torch was fixed. To tear out the torch, place in its stead the barrel of

powder, throw down the pile of paving-stones on the barrel, which was at once unheaded with a sort of terrible obedience, had only occupied so much time as stooping and rising again; and now all, National Guards and Municipal Guards, officers and privates, collected at the other end of the barricade gazed at him in stupor, as he stood with one foot on the paving-stones, the torch in his hand, his haughty face illuminated by a fatal resolution, approaching the flame of the torch to the formidable heap, in which the broken powder-barrel could be distinguished, and uttering the terrifying cry,—

“ Begone, or I will blow up the barricade ! ”

Marius, on this barricade after the octogenarian, was the vision of the young revolution after the apparition of the old one.

“ Blow up the barricade ! ” a sergeant said, “ and yourself too ! ”

Marius answered, “ And myself too ! ”

And he lowered the torch toward the barrel of gunpowder; but there was no one left on the barricade; the assailants, leaving their dead and their wounded, fell back pell-mell and in disorder to the end of the street, and disappeared again in the night. It was a *sauve qui peut*, and the barricade was saved. All surrounded Marius, and Courfeyrac fell on his neck.

“ Here you are ! ”

“ What happiness ! ” said Combeferre.

“ You arrived just in time,” said Bossuet.

“ Were it not for you I should be dead ! ” Courfeyrac remarked.

“ Without you I should have been goosed,” Gavroche added.

Marius added,—

“ Who is the leader ? ”

“ Yourself,” Enjolras replied.

Marius the whole day through had had a furnace in his brain, but now it was a tornado, and this tornado which was in him produced on him the effect of being outside him and carrying him away. It seemed to him as if he were already an immense distance from life, and his two luminous months of joy and love suddenly terminated at this frightful precipice. Cosette lost to him, this barricade, M. Mabeuf letting himself be killed for the Republic, himself chief of the insurgents—all these things seemed to him a monstrous nightmare, and he was obliged to make a mental effort in order to remind himself that all which surrounded him was real. Marius had not lived long enough yet to know that nothing is so imminent as the impossi-

ble, and that what must be always foreseen is the unforeseen. He witnessed the performance of his own drama, as if it were a piece of which he understood nothing. In his mental fog he did not recognize Javert, who, fastened to his post, had not made a movement of his head during the attack on the barricade, and saw the revolt buzzing round him with the resignation of a martyr and the majesty of a judge. In the mean while, the assailants no longer stirred; they could be heard marching and moving at the end of the street, but did not venture into it, either because they were waiting for orders, or else required reinforcements, before rushing again upon this impregnable redoubt. The insurgents had posted sentries, and some who were medical students had begun dressing wounds. All the tables had been dragged out of the wine-shop, with the exception of the two reserved for the lint and the cartridges, and the one on which Father Mabœuf lay; they had been added to the barricade, and the mattresses off the beds of Widow Hucheloup and the girls had been put in their place. On these mattresses the wounded were laid; as for the three poor creatures who inhabited Corinth, no one knew what had become of them, but they were at length found hidden in the cellar,—“Like lawyers,” Bossuet said; and added, “Women, fie!”

A poignant emotion darkened the joy of the liberated barricade; the roll call was made, and one of the insurgents was missing. Who was he? one of the dearest and most valiant, Jean Prouvaire. He was sought for among the dead, but was not there; he was sought for among the wounded, and was not there; he was evidently a prisoner. Combeferre said to Enjolras,—

“They have our friend, but we have their agent; do you insist on the death of this spy?”

“Yes,” Enjolras replied, “but less than the life of Jean Prouvaire.”

This was said in the bar-room close to Javert’s post.

“Well,” Combeferre continued, “I will fasten a handkerchief to my cane, and go as a flag of truce to offer to give them their man for our man.”

“Listen,” said Enjolras, as he laid his hand on Combeferre’s arm.

There was a meaning click of guns at the end of the street, and a manly voice could be heard crying,—

“Long live France! long live the future!”

They recognized Prouvaire’s voice; a flash passed and a detonation burst forth; then the silence returned.

“They have killed him,” Combeferre exclaimed.

Enjolras looked at Javert and said to him,—
“Your friends have just shot you.”

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE AGONY OF DEATH AND THE AGONY OF LIFE.

IT is a singularity of this sort of war, that the attack on barricades is almost always made in the front, and that the assailants generally refrain from turning positions, either because they suspect ambuscades, or are afraid to enter winding streets. The whole attention of the insurgents was, consequently, directed to the great barricade, which was evidently the constantly threatened point, and the contest would infallibly recommence there. Marius, however, thought of the little barricade, and went to it; it was deserted, and only guarded by the lamp which flickered among the paving-stones. However, the Mondétour lane and the branches of the little Truanderie were perfectly calm. As Marius, after making his inspection, was going back, he heard his name faintly uttered in the darkness,—

“Monsieur Marius!”

He started, for he recognized the voice which had summoned him two hours back through the garden railings in the Rue Plumet, but this voice now only seemed to be a gasp; he looked around him and saw nobody. Marius fancied that he was mistaken, and that it was an illusion added by his mind to the extraordinary realities which were pressing round him. He took a step to leave the remote angle in which the barricade stood.

“Monsieur Marius!” the voice repeated; this time he could not doubt, for he had heard distinctly; he looked around but saw nothing.

“At your feet,” the voice said.

He stooped down, and saw in the shadow a form crawling toward him on the pavement. It was the speaker. The lamp enabled him to distinguish a blouse, torn cotton-velvet trousers, bare feet, and something that resembled a pool of blood; Marius also caught a glimpse of a pale face raised to him, and saying,—

"Do you not recognize me?"

"No."

"Eponine."

Marius eagerly stooped down; it was really that hapless girl, dressed in male clothes.

"What brought you here? what are you doing?"

"Dying," she said to him.

There are words and incidents that wake up crushed beings; Marius cried with a start,—

"You are wounded! wait, I will carry you into the wine-shop! your wound will be dressed! is it serious? how shall I catch hold of you so as not to hurt you? where is it you suffer? Help, good God! but what did you come to do here?"

And he tried to pass his hand under her to lift her, and as he did so he touched her hand—she uttered a faint cry.

"Have I hurt you?" Marius asked.

"A little."

"But I only touched your hand."

She raised her hand to Marius' eyes, and he could see a hole right through it.

"What is the matter with your hand?" he said.

"It is pierced."

"Pierced?"

"Yes."

"What with?"

"A bullet."

"How?"

"Did you see a musket aimed at you?"

"Yes, and a hand laid on the muzzle."

"It was mine."

Marius shuddered.

"What madness! poor child! but all the better, if that is your wound, it is nothing, so let me carry you to a bed. Your wound will be dressed, and people do not die of a bullet through the hand."

She murmured,—

"The bullet passed through my hand but came out of my back, so it is useless to move me from here. I will tell you how you can do me more good than a surgeon; sit down by my side on that stone."

He obeyed; she laid her head on his knees, and without looking at him, said,—

"Oh, how good that is, how comforting! There! I do not suffer now."

She remained silent for a moment, then turned her head with an effort, and gazed at Marius.

"Do you know what, M. Marius? it annoyed me that you entered that garden, though it was very foolish of me, as I showed you the house, and then, too, I ought to have remembered that a young gentleman like you—"

She broke off, and leaping over the gloomy transitions which her mind doubtless contained, she added with a heart-rending smile,—

"You thought me ugly, did you not?"

Then she continued,—

"You are lost, and no one will leave the barricade now. I brought you here, you know, and you are going to die, I feel sure of it. And yet, when I saw the soldier aiming at you, I laid my hand on the muzzle of his gun. How droll that is, but the reason was that I wished to die with you. When I received that bullet I dragged myself here, and as no one saw me I was not picked up. I waited for you and said, 'Will he not come?' Oh, if you only knew how I bit my blouse, for I was suffering so terribly, but now I feel all right. Do you remember the day when I came into your room and looked at myself in your glass, and the day when I met you on the boulevard near the washerwomen? how the birds sang, and it is not so very long ago. You gave me five francs, and I said to you, 'I do not want your money.' I hope you picked up your coin, for you are not rich, and I did not think of telling you to pick it up. The sun was shining and it was not at all cold. Do you remember, M. Marius! Oh, I am so happy, for everybody is going to die."

She had a wild, grave, and heart-rending look, and her ragged blouse displayed her naked throat. While speaking, she laid her wounded hand on her chest, in which there was another hole, and whence every moment a stream of blood spirted like a jet of wine from an open bung. Marius gazed at this unfortunate creature with profound compassion.

"Oh!" she suddenly continued, "it is coming back: I choke!"

She raised her blouse and bit it, and her limbs stiffened on the pavement. At this moment Gavroche's crowing voice could be heard from the barricade: the lad had got on to a table to load his musket, and was gaily singing the song so popular at that day,—

"En voyant Lafayette,
Le gendarme répète:
Sauvons-nous! sauvons-nous! sauvons-nous!"

Eponine raised herself and listened, then she muttered,—
“It is he.”

And, turning to Marius, added,—

“My brother is here, but he must not see me, or he would scold me.”

“Your brother?” Marius asked, as he thought most bitterly and sadly of the duties toward the Thénardiers which his father had left him; “which is your brother?”

“That little fellow.”

“The one who is singing?”

“Yes.”

Marius made a move.

“Oh, do not go away,” she said, “it will not be long just now.”

She was almost sitting up, but her voice was very low, and every now and then interrupted by the death-rattle. She put her face as close as she could to that of Marius, and added with a strange expression,—

“Come, I will not play you a trick: I have had a letter addressed to you in my pocket since yesterday; I was told to put it in the post, but kept it, as I did not wish it to reach you. But, perhaps, you will not be angry with me when we meet again ere long, for we shall meet again, shall we not? Take your letter.”

She convulsively seized Marius’ hand with her wounded hand, but seemed no longer to feel the suffering. She placed Marius’ hand in her blouse pocket, and he really felt a paper.

“Take it,” she said.

Marius took the letter, and she gave a nod of satisfaction and consolation.

“Now, for my trouble; promise me—”

And she stopped.

“What?” Marius asked.

“Promise me!”

“I do promise!”

“Promise to kiss me on the forehead when I am dead—I shall feel it.”

She let her head fall again on Marius’ knees and her eyes closed—he fancied the poor soul departed. Eponine remained motionless, but all at once, at the moment when Marius believed her eternally asleep, she slowly opened her eyes, on which the gloomy profundity of death was visible, and said to him with an accent whose gentleness seemed already to come from another world,—

"And then, Monsieur Marius, I think that I was a little bit in love with you."

She tried to smile once more, and expired.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

GAVROCHE CALCULATES DISTANCES.

MARIUS kept his promise ; he deposited a kiss on this livid forehead, upon which an icy perspiration beaded. It was not an infidelity to Cosette, but a pensive and sweet farewell to an unhappy soul. He had not taken without a quiver the letter which Eponine gave him ; for he at once suspected an event in it, and was impatient to read it. The heart of man is so constituted,—and the unfortunate child had scarce closed her eyes ere Marius thought of unfolding the paper. He gently laid her on the ground and went off, for something told him that he could not read this letter in the presence of a corpse. He walked up to a candle on the ground-floor room ; it was a little note folded and sealed with the elegant care peculiar to women. The address was in a feminine handwriting, and ran,—

"To Monsieur, Monsieur Marius Pontmercy, at M. Courfeyrac's, No. 16, Rue de la Verrerie."

He broke the seal and read :

"My well-beloved,—Alas, my father insists on our going away at once. We shall be this evening at No. 7, Rue de l'Homme Armé, and within a week in London.—COSETTE. June 4."

Such was the innocence of their love, that Marius did not even know Cosette's handwriting.

What had happened may be told in a few words. Eponine had done it all. After the night of June 3 she had had a double thought,—to foil the plans of her father and the bandits upon the house in the Rue Plumet, and separate Marius and Cosette. She had changed rags with the first scamp she met, who thought it amusing to dress up as a woman, while Eponine disguised herself as a man. It was she who gave Jean Valjean the expressive warning, and he had gone straight home and said to Cosette, "We shall start this evening and go to

the Rue de l'Homme Armé with Toussaint. Next week we shall be in London." Cosette, startled by this unexpected blow, had hastily written two lines to Marius, but how was she to put the letter in the post? She never went out alone, and Toussaint, surprised by such an errand, would certainly show the letter to M. Fauchelevent. In this state of anxiety, Cosette noticed through the railings Eponine in male clothes, who now incessantly prowled round the garden. Cosette had summoned "this young workman," and gave him the letter and a five-franc piece, saying,—"Carry this letter at once to its address," and Eponine put the letter in her pocket. The next day she went to Courfeyrac's and asked for Marius, not to hand him the letter, but "to see," a thing which every jealous, loving soul will understand. There she waited for Marius, or at any rate Courfeyrac—always to see. When Courfeyrac said to her, "We are going to the barricades," an idea crossed her mind—to throw herself into this death as she would have done into any other, and thrust Marius into it. She followed Courfeyrac, assured herself of the spot where the barricade was being built; and, feeling certain, since Marius had not received the letter, that he would go at nightfall to the usual meeting-place, she went to the Rue Plumet, waited for Marius there, and gave him that summons in the name of his friends, which, as she thought, must lead him to the barricade. She reckoned on Marius' despair when he did not find Cosette, and she was not mistaken, and then she returned to the Rue de la Chanvrerie. We have just seen what she did there; she died with the tragic joy of jealous hearts, which drag the beloved being down to death with them and say, "No one shall have him!"

Marius covered Cosette's letter with kisses; she loved him then! and for a moment he had an idea that he ought not to die, but then he said to himself, "Her father is taking her to England, and my grandfather will not give his consent to the marriage; no change has taken place in fatality." Dreamers like Marius undergo such supreme despondencies, and desperate resolves issue from them; the fatigue of living is insupportable, and death is sooner over. Then he thought that two duties were left him to accomplish; inform Cosette of his death, and send her his last farewell, and save from the imminent catastrophe which was preparing that poor boy, Eponine's brother and Thénardier's son. He had a pocket-book about him, the same which had contained the paper on which he had written so many love-thoughts for Cosette; he tore out a leaf, and wrote in pencil these few lines,—

"Our marriage was impossible ; I asked my grandfather's consent, and he refused to give it ; I have no fortune, nor have you. I ran to your house, and did not find you there ; you remember the pledge I made to you, and I have kept it. I die. I love you, and when you read this my soul will be near you, and smile upon you."

Having nothing with which to seal this letter, he merely folded it, and wrote on it the address,

"To Mademoiselle Cosette Fauchelevent, at M. Fauchelevent's, No. 7, Rue de l'Homme Armé."

The letter folded, he stood for a moment in thought, then opened his pocket-book again, and wrote with the same pencil these lines on the first page.

"My name is Marius Pontmercy. Carry my body to my grandfather, M. Gillenormand, No. 6, Rue des Filles du Calvaire, in the Marais."

He returned the book to his coat pocket, and then summoned Gavroche. The lad, on hearing Marius' voice, ran up with his joyous and devoted face.

"Will you do something for me ?"

"Everything," said Gavroche. "God of Gods ! my goose would have been cooked without you."

"You see this letter ?"

"Yes."

"Take it. Leave the barricade at once (Gavroche began scratching his ear anxiously), and to-morrow morning you will deliver it at its address, No. 7, Rue de l'Homme Armé."

The heroic lad replied,—

"Well, but during that time the barricade will be attacked, and I shall not be here."

"The barricade will not be attacked again till daybreak according to all appearances, and will not be taken till to-morrow afternoon."

The new respite which the assailants granted to the barricade was really prolonged ; it was one of those intermittences frequent in night-fights, which are always followed by redoubled obstinacy.

"Well," said Gavroche, "suppose I were to deliver your letter to-morrow morning ?"

"It will be too late, for the barricade will probably be blockaded, all the issues guarded, and you will be unable to get out. Be off at once."

Gavroche could not find any reply, so he stood there undecided, and scratching his head sorrowfully. All at once he seized the letter with one of those bird-like movements of his.

"All right," he said.

And he ran off toward the Mondétour lane. Gavroche had an idea which decided him, but which he did not mention; it was the following.

"It is scarce midnight, the Rue de l'Homme Armé is no great distance off. I will deliver the letter at once, and be back in time."

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE TREACHEROUS BLOTTING-BOOK.

WHAT are the convulsions of a city compared with the convulsions of a soul? man is even a greater profundity than the people. Jean Valjean at this very moment was suffering from a frightful internal earthquake, and all the gulfs were re-opened within him. He too was quivering like Paris, on the threshold of a formidable and obscure revolution. A few hours had sufficed to cover his destiny and his conscience with shadows, and of him, as of Paris, it might be said, "The two principles are face to face." The white angel and the black angel are about to wrestle with each other on the brink of the abyss; which will hurl the other down?

On the evening of that same day, Jean Valjean, accompanied by Cosette and Toussaint, proceeded to the Rue de l'Homme Armé, where a tremendous incident was fated to take place. Cosette had not left the Rue Plumet without an attempt at resistance, and for the first time since they had lived together, the will of Cosette and the will of Jean Valjean had shown themselves distinct, and had contradicted each other, though they did not come into collision. There was objection on one side and inflexibility on the other: for the abrupt advice to move, thrown to Jean Valjean by a stranger, had alarmed him to such a point as to render him absolute. He fancied himself tracked and pursued, and Cosette was compelled to yield. The pair reached the Rue de l'Homme Armé without exchanging a syllable, for each was so deep in personal thought, while Jean Valjean was so anxious that he did not notice Cosette's sadness, and Cosette was so sad that she did not notice Jean Valjean's anxiety. Jean Valjean had brought Toussaint with him, which he had never done in his previous absences, but he foresaw that he might pos-

sibly never return to the Rue Plumet, and he could neither leave Toussaint behind him nor tell her his secret. Moreover, he felt her to be devoted and sure; the treachery of a servant to a master begins with curiosity, and Toussaint, as if predestined to be Jean Valjean's servant, was not curious. She was wont to say through her stammering in her patois of a Barnevile peasant, "I am so, I do my work, and the rest does not concern me." In his departure from the Rue Plumet, which was almost a flight, Jean Valjean took away with him nothing but the fragrant little portmanteau, christened by Cosette the *inseparable*. Packed trunks would have required porters, and porters are witnesses; a hackney-coach had been called to the gate in the Rue de Babylone and they went away in it. It was with great difficulty that Toussaint obtained permission to pack up a little stock of linen and clothes, and a few toilet articles; Cosette, herself, only took her desk and blotting-book. Jean Valjean, in order to heighten the solitude and mystery of this disappearance, had so arranged as to leave the Rue Plumet at night-fall, which had given Cosette the time to write her note to Marius. They reached the Rue de l'Homme Armé when it was quite dark, and went to bed in perfect silence.

The apartments in this street were situated on a second floor in a back-yard, and consisted of two bed-rooms, a dining-room, and a kitchen adjoining, with a closet in which was a flock-bed, that fell to the lot of Toussaint. The dining-room was at the same time ante-room and separated the two bed-rooms, and the apartments were provided with the necessary articles of furniture. Human nature is so constituted that men become reassured almost as absurdly as they are alarmed; hence Jean Valjean had scarce reached the Rue de l'Homme Armé ere his anxiety cleared away and was gradually dissipated. There are calming places which act to some extent mechanically on the mind, and when a street is obscure the inhabitants are peaceful. Jean Valjean felt a contagious tranquillity in this lane of old Paris, which is so narrow that it is barred against vehicles by a cross-beam, which is dumb and deaf amid the noisy town, full of twilight in broad daylight, and, so to speak, incapable of feeling emotions between its two rows of aged houses, which are silent, as old people generally are. There is in this street a stagnant oblivion, and Jean Valjean breathed again in it, for how was it possible that he could be found there? His first care was to place the *inseparable* by his side; he slept soundly, and night counsels, we might add, night appeases. The next morning he woke up almost gay. He considered the dining-room charming, though it was hideous, for it was furnished

with an old round table, a low side-board, surmounted by a mirror, a rickety easy chair, and a few chairs encumbered with Toussaint's parcels. In one of these parcels Jean Valjean's National Guard uniform could be seen through an opening.

As for Cosette, she ordered Toussaint to bring a basin of broth to her bed-room, and did not make her appearance till evening. At about 5 o'clock, Toussaint, who went about very busy with this small moving, placed a cold fowl on the dinner-table, which Cosette consented to look at, through deference for her father. This done, Cosette protesting a persistent headache, said good-night to Jean Valjean, and shut herself up in her bed-room. Jean Valjean ate a wing of the fowl with appetite, and with his elbows on the table, and gradually growing reassured, regained possession of his serenity. While he was eating this modest dinner, he vaguely heard twice or thrice stammering Toussaint say to him, "There is a disturbance, sir, and people are fighting in Paris." But, absorbed in a multitude of internal combinations, he had paid no attention to her; truth to tell, he had not heard her. He rose and began walking from the door to the window, and from the window to the door with calmness. Cosette, his sole preoccupation, reverted to his mind, not that he was alarmed by this headache, a slight nervous attack, a girl's pouting, a momentary cloud, which would disappear in a day or two, but he thought of the future, and, as usual, thought of it gently. After all, he saw no obstacle to his happy life resuming its course: at certain hours everything seems impossible, at others everything appears easy, and Jean Valjean was in one of those good hours. They usually arrive after bad hours, as day does after night, through that law of succession and contrast which is the basis of our nature, and which superficial minds call antithesis. In this peaceful street where he had sought shelter, Jean Valjean freed himself from all that had troubled him for some time past, and from the very fact that he had seen so much darkness he was beginning to perceive a little azure. To have left the Rue Plumet without any complication or incident was a good step gained, and perhaps it would be wise to leave the country, were it only for a few months, and go to London. Well, they would go; what did he care whether he were in England or France, provided that he had Cosette by his side? Cosette was his nation, Cosette sufficed for his happiness, and the idea that he perhaps did not suffice for Cosette's happiness, that idea which had formerly been his fever and sleeplessness, did not even present itself to his mind. All his past sorrows had collapsed, and he was in the centre of optimism. Cosette, being by his

side, seemed to be his, and this is an optical effect which everybody has experienced. He arranged in his mind, and with all possible facility, the departure for England with Cosette, and he saw his felicity re-constructed, no matter where, in the perspectives of his reverie.

While slowly walking up and down, his eye suddenly fell on something strange. He noticed, facing him in the inclined mirror over the side-board, and read distinctly,—

“ My well-beloved. Alas ! my father insists on our leaving at once. We shall be this evening at No. 7, Rue de l’Homme Armé, and within a week in London.—Cosette, June 4th.”

Jean Valjean stopped with haggard gaze. Cosette, on arriving, had laid her blotting-book on the side-board facing the mirror, and, immersed in her painful thoughts, had forgotten it there, without even noticing that she had left it open at the very page on which she had dried the few lines she had written and intrusted to the young workman passing along the Rue Plumet. The writing was imprinted on the blotting-paper and the mirror reflected the writing. The result was what is called in geometry a symmetric image, so that the writing reversed on the blotting-paper was placed straight in the mirror, and offered its natural direction, and Jean Valjean had before his eyes the letter written on the previous evening by Cosette to Marius. It was simple and crushing. Jean Valjean walked up to the mirror and read the lines again, but did not believe in them. They produced on him the effect of appearing in a flash of lightning: it was an hallucination—it was impossible—it was not. Gradually his perception became more precise, he looked at Cosette’s blotting-book, and the feeling of the real fact returned to him. He took up the blotting-book, said, “ It comes from that.” He feverishly examined the lines imprinted on the blotting-paper, but as they ran backward he could see no meaning in the strange scrawl. Then he said to himself, “ Why, it means nothing, there is nothing written there.” And he drew a long breath with inexpressible relief. Who has not felt such wild delight in horrible moments ? the soul does not surrender to despair till it has exhausted every illusion.

He held the book in his hand and gazed at it, stupidly happy, almost ready to laugh at the hallucination of which he had been the dupe. All at once his eyes fell again on the mirror, and he saw the vision again ; the lines stood on it with inexorable clearness. This time it was no mirage, it was palpable, it was the writing turned straight in the mirror, and he comprehended the fact. Jean Valjean tottered, let the blotting-

book slip from his grasp, and fell into the old easy-chair by the side of the side-board with hanging head and glassy, wandering eye. He said to himself that it was evident that the light of this world was eclipsed, and that Cosette had written that to somebody. Then he heard his soul, which had become terrible again, utter a hoarse roar in the darkness. Just attempt to take from the lion the dog he has in his cage ! Strange, and sad to say, at that moment Marius had not yet received Cosette's letter, and accident had treacherously carried it to Jean Valjean before delivering it to Marius. Jean Valjean up to that day had never been conquered by a trial ; he had been subjected to frightful assaults, not a blow of evil fortune had been spared him, and the ferocity of fate, armed with all social revenge and contempt, had taken him for its victim and ferociously attacked him. He had accepted, when it was necessary, every extremity ; he had surrendered his reacquired inviolability as man, given up his liberty, risked his head, lost everything and suffered everything, and he had remained disinterested and stoical, to such an extent that at times he seemed to be oblivious of self like a martyr. His conscience, hardened to all possible assaults of adversity, might seem quite impregnable, but any one who had now gazed into his heart would have been compelled to allow that it was growing weak. In truth, of all the tortures he had undergone in this long trial to which fate subjected him, this was the most formidable, and never had such a vice held him before. Alas ! the supreme trial, we may say the sole trial, is the loss of the being whom we love.

Poor old Jean Valjean did not assuredly love Cosette otherwise than as a father, but, as we have already remarked, the very widowhood of his life had introduced all the forms of love into this paternity ; he loved Cosette as his daughter, loved her as his mother, and loved her as his sister, and, as he had never had a mistress or a wife, that feeling too, the most clinging of all, was mingled with the others, vague, ignorant, pure with the purity of blindness, unconscious, heavenly, angelic, and divine, less as a feeling than an instinct, less as an instinct than an attraction, imperceptible, invisible, but real ; and love, properly so called, was in his enormous tenderness for Cosette as the vein of gold is in the mountain, dark and virginal. Our readers must study for a moment this state of the heart ; no marriage was possible between them, not even that of souls, and yet it is certain that their destinies were wedded. Excepting Cosette, that is to say, excepting a childhood, Jean Valjean, during the whole of his life, had known nothing about things that may be loved. Those passions and loves which

succeed each other had not produced in him those successive stages of green, light green, or dark green, which may be noticed on leaves that survive the winter, and in men who pass their fiftieth year. In fine, as we have more than once urged, all this internal fusion, all this whole, whose resultant was a lofty virtue, ended by making Jean Valjean a father to Cosette. A strange father, forged out of the grand-sire, the son, the brother, and the husband, which were in Jean Valjean; a father in whom there was even a mother; a father who loved Cosette and adored her, and who had this child for his light, his abode, his family, his country, and his paradise. Hence, when he saw that it was decidedly ended, that she was escaping from him, slipping through his fingers, concealing herself, that she was a cloud, that she was water, when he had before his eyes this crushing evidence, another is the object of her heart, another is the wish of her life, she has a lover, I am only the father, I no longer exist,—when he could no longer doubt, when he said to himself, "She is leaving me," the sorrow he experienced went beyond the limits of the possible. To have done all that he had done to attain this! and to be nothing! Then, as we have just stated, he had a quivering of revolt from head to foot; he felt even in the roots of his hair the immense re-awaking of selfishness, and the "I" yelled in the depths of this man's soul.

There are such things as internal earthquakes; the penetration of a desperate certainty into a man is not effected without removing and breaking certain profound elements which are at times the man himself. Grief, when it attains that pitch, is a frantic flight of all the forces of the conscience, and such crises are fatal. Few among us emerge from them equal to ourselves, and firm in our duty, for when the limit of suffering is exceeded the most imperturbable virtue is disconcerted. Jean Valjean took up the blotting-book and convinced himself afresh; he bent down as if petrified, and with fixed eye, over the undeniable lines, and such a cloud collected within him that it might be believed that the whole interior of his soul was in a state of collapse. He examined this revelation through the exaggerations of reverie with an apparent and startling calmness, for it is a formidable thing when a man's calmness attains the coldness of a statue. He measured the frightful step which his destiny had taken without any suspicion on his part, he recalled his fears of the past summer, so madly dissipated, he recognized the precipice, it was still the same, but Jean Valjean was no longer at the top but at the bottom. It was an extraordinary and crushing fact that he had fallen without perceiving it, the whole light of his life had fled while he still fancied

he could see the sun. His instinct did not hesitate ; he brought together certain circumstances, certain dates, certain blushes, and certain palenesses of Cosette, and said to himself, "It is he!" The divination of despair is a species of mysterious bow which never misses its mark, and with its first shaft it hit Marius. He did not know the name, but at once found the man ; he perceived distinctly at the bottom of the implacable evocation of memory the unknown prowler of the Luxembourg, that villainous seeker of amourettes, that romantic idler, that imbecile, that coward, for it is cowardice to exchange loving glances with girls who have by their side a father who loves them. After feeling quite certain that this young man was at the bottom of the situation, and that all this came from him, Jean Valjean, the regenerated man, the man who had toiled so heavily in his soul, the man who had made so many efforts to resolve his whole life, his whole misery, and his whole misfortune, into love, looked into himself and saw there a spectre—hatred.

Great griefs contain exhaustion, and discourage us with life ; the man into whom they enter feels something retire from him. In youth their visit is mournful, at a later date it is sinister. Alas, when the blood is hot, when the hair is black, when the head is upright on the body like the flame on the candle, when the heart, full of a yearning love, still has palpitations which may be given to it in return, when a man has time to recover from the wound, when all women are there, and all the smiles, and all the future, and the whole horizon, when the strength of life is complete—if despair be a frightful thing under such circumstances, what is it then in old age, when years are growing more and more livid, at that twilight hour when the stars of the tomb are beginning to become visible ! While Jean Valjean was thinking, Toussaint came in ; he rose and asked her,—

" Do you know where about it is ? "

Toussaint, in her stupefaction, could only answer,—

" I beg your pardon, sir."

Jean Valjean continued,—

" Did you not say just now that they were fighting ? "

" Oh yes, sir," Toussaint replied ; " over at St Merry."

There are some mechanical movements which come to us, without our cognizance, from our deepest thoughts. It was doubtless under the impulse of a movement of this nature, of which he was scarce conscious, that Jean Valjean found himself five minutes later in the street. He was bareheaded, and sat down on the bench before his house, seemingly listening.

Night had set in.

CHAPTER XXX.

WHILE COSETTE SLEEPS.

How long did he remain there? what was the ebb and flow of this tragical meditation? did he draw himself up? did he remain bowed down? had he been bent till he was broken? could he recover himself and stand again upon something solid in his conscience? Probably he could not have said himself. The street was deserted; and a few anxious citizens who hurriedly returned home scarce noticed him, for each for himself is the rule in times of peril. The lamplighter came as usual to light the lamp which was exactly opposite the door of No. 7 and went away. Jean Valjean would not have appeared to be a living man to any one who might have examined him in this gloom, and he sat on his bench motionless, like a statue of ice. His despair had got beyond congelation. The tocsin and vague stormy rumours could be heard, and in the midst of all these convulsions of the bell blended with the riot, the clock of St Paul struck the eleventh hour, solemnly and without hurrying, for the tocsin is man, the hour is God. The passing of the hour produced no effect on Jean Valjean, and he did not stir. Almost immediately after, however, a sudden detonation broke out in the direction of the Halles, followed by a second even more violent,—it was probably that attack on the barricade of the Rue de la Chanvrerie which we have just seen repulsed by Marius. At this double discharge, whose fury seemed increased by the stupor of the night, Jean Valjean started; he turned in the direction whence the sound came, but then fell back on his bench, crossed his arms, and his head slowly bent down again on his chest. He resumed his dark dialogue with himself.

All at once he raised his eyes, for there was some one in the street; he heard footsteps close to him, and by the light of the lamp he perceived a livid, young, and radiant face, in the direction of the street which runs past the Archives. It was Gavroche, who had just arrived from the Rue de la Chanvrerie; Gavroche was looking up in the air, and appeared to be seeking. He saw Jean Valjean distinctly, but paid no attention to him. Gavroche, after looking up in the air, looked down on the ground; he stood on tip-toe, and felt the doors and ground-floor windows,—they were all shut, bolted, and barred. After examining the fronts of several houses barricaded in this way

the gamin shrugged his shoulders, and then resumed his self-colloquy with himself, thus, "By Jove!" Then he looked up in the air again. Jean Valjean, who a moment previously in his present state of mind would neither have spoken to nor answered any one, felt an irresistible impulse to address this lad.

"My little boy," he said, "what is the matter with you?"

"Why, I'm hungry," Gavroche answered bluntly. And he added, "Little yourself."

Jean Valjean felt in his pocket and pulled out a five-franc piece. But Gavroche, who was a species of wagtail, and rapidly passed from one gesture to another, had just picked up a stone. He had noticed the lamp.

"Hilloh!" he said, "you have still got lights here. You are not acting rightly, my friends, that is disorderly conduct. Break it for me."

And he threw the stone at the lamp, whose glass fell with such a noise that the citizens concealed behind their curtains in the opposite house cried, "There is '93!" The lamp oscillated violently and went out; the street suddenly became dark.

"That's it, old street," said Gavroche, "put on your night-cap." Then, turning to Jean Valjean, he said,—

"What do you call that gigantic monument which you have there at the end of the street? it's the Archives, isn't it? let's pull down some of those great brutes of columns and make a tidy barricade."

Jean Valjean walked up to Gavroche.

"Poor creature," he said in a low voice, and as if speaking to himself, "he is hungry."

And he placed the five-franc piece in his hand. Gavroche raised his nose, amazed at the size of this double sou; he looked at it in the darkness, and the whiteness of the double sou dazzled him. He was acquainted with five-franc pieces by hearsay, and their reputation was agreeable to him; he was delighted to see one so closely, and said, "Let us contemplate the tiger." He looked at it for some moments in ecstasy: then, turning to Jean Valjean, he held out the coin to him, and said majestically,—

"Citizen, I prefer breaking the lamps. Take back your ferocious animal, for I am not to be corrupted. It has five claws, but can't scratch me."

"Have you a mother?" Jean Valjean asked.

Gavroche replied,—

"Perhaps more than you."

"Well," Jean Valjean continued, "keep that money for your mother."

Gavroche was affected. Moreover, he had noticed that the man who was addressing him had no hat on, and this inspired him with confidence.

"Really, then," he said, "it is not to prevent me breaking the lamps?"

"Break as many as you like."

"You are a worthy man," said Gavroche.

And he put the five-franc piece in one of his pockets. Then, with increasing confidence, he added,—

"Do you belong to this street?"

"Yes, why?"

"Can you point me out No. 7?"

"What do you want at No. 7?"

Here the lad stopped, for he feared lest he had said too much. He energetically plunged his nails into his hair, and confined himself to answering,—

"Ah, there it is."

An idea flashed across Jean Valjean's mind, for agony has lucidities of that nature. He said to the boy,—

"Have you brought me the letter which I am expecting?"

"You?" said Gavroche, "you ain't a woman."

"The letter is for Mademoiselle Cosette, is it not?"

"Cosette?" Gavroche grumbled; "yes, I think it is that absurd name."

"Well," Jean Valjean continued, "you have to deliver the letter to me, so give it here."

"In that case, you must be aware that I am sent from the barricade?"

"Of course," said Jean Valjean.

Gavroche thrust his hand into another of his pockets, and produced a square folded letter; then he gave the military salute.

"Respect for the despatch," he said; "it comes from the Provisional Government."

"Give it to me," said Jean Valjean.

Gavroche held the paper above his head.

"You must not imagine that it is a love-letter, though it is for a woman; it is for the people; we are fighting, and we respect the sex; we are not like people in the world of fashion, where there are lions that send poulets to camels."

"Give it to me."

"After all," Gavroche continued, "you look like an honest man."

"Make haste."

"Here it is."

And he handed the paper to Jean Valjean.

"And make haste, Monsieur Chose, since Mamselle Cosette is waiting."

Gavroche felt pleased at having made this pun. Jean Valjean added,—

"Must the answer be taken to St Merry?"

"You would make in that way," Gavroche exclaimed, "one of those cakes vulgarly called *brioches*. That letter comes from the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and I am going back to it. Good-night, citizen."

This said, Gavroche went away, or, to speak more correctly, resumed his bird-like flight to the spot whence he had escaped. He plunged again into the darkness, as if there were a hole there, with the rigid rapidity of a projectile: the lane of l'Homme Armé became once again silent and solitary. In a twinkling, this strange lad, who had shadow and dreams within him, buried himself in the gloom of these rows of black houses, and was lost in it like smoke in darkness, and it might have been fancied that he was dispersed, had vanished, had not, a few minutes after his disappearance, a noisy breakage of glass, and the splendid echo of a lamp falling on the pavement, suddenly reawakened the indignant citizens. It was Gavroche passing along the Rue de Chaume.

Jean Valjean re-entered with Marius's letter: he groped his way up-stairs, pleased with the darkness like an owl that holds its prey, gently opened and closed the door, listened whether he could hear any sound, convinced himself that Cosette and Toussaint were, according to all appearances, asleep, and plunged into the Fumade lighting bottle three or four matches before he could procure a spark, for his hand trembled so, as what he had just done was a robbery. At last his candle was lit, he sat down at the table, opened the letter, and read. In such violent emotions men do not read, they hurl down, so to speak, the paper they hold, clutch it like a victim, crumple it, bury in it the nails of their fury or delight, they run to the end, they dash at the beginning: the attention is feverish, it understands the essential facts, it seizes on one point, and all the rest disappears. In the note from Marius to Cosette Jean Valjean only saw these words,—

"—I die: when you read this my soul will be near you."

In the presence of this line he felt a horrible bedazzlement ; he remained for a moment as if crushed by the change of emotion which took place in him. He gazed at Marius's letter with a species of drunken amazement, he had before his eyes this splendour, the death of the hated being. He uttered a frightful cry of internal joy. So all was over, and the dénouement arrived more quickly than he could have dared to hope. The being that encumbered his destiny was disappearing, he went away of his own accord, freely and willingly, without his doing anything in the matter, without any fault on the part of him, Jean Valjean ; "that man" was going to die, perhaps was already dead. Here his fever made its calculations,—“No, he is not yet dead. The letter was evidently written to be read by Cosette on the next morning : since the two volleys he had heard between 11 o'clock and midnight nothing had occurred : the barricade would not be seriously attacked till day-break, but no matter, from the moment when ‘that man’ is mixed up in this war, he is lost, he is caught in the cog-wheels. Jean Valjean felt himself delivered ; he was going to find himself once more alone with Cosette, the rivalry ceased and the future began again. He need only keep the note in his pocket, and Cosette would never know what had become of ‘that man ;’ I have only to let things take their course. That man cannot escape, and if he is not dead yet it is certain that he is going to die. What happiness !” All this said internally, he became gloomy : he went down and aroused the porter. About an hour later Jean Valjean left the house in the uniform of a National Guard and armed. The porter had easily obtained for him in the neighbourhood the articles to complete his equipment : he had a loaded musket and a full cartouche-box. He proceeded in the direction of the Halles.

CHAPTER XXXI.

GAVROCHE'S EXCESS OF ZEAL.

IN the mean while an adventure had happened to Gavroche ; after consciously stoning the lamp in the Rue du Chaume, he approached the Rue des Vieilles-Haudriettes, and not seeing “a cat” there, found the opportunity excellent for striking up a song at the full pitch of his lungs. His march, far from being checked

by the singing, became accelerated, and he sowed along the sleeping or terrified houses the following incendiary couplets :

L'oiseau médit dans les charmilles,
Et prétend qu' hier Atala
Avec un Russe s'en alla.

Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

Mon ami Pierrot, tu babilles,
Parce que l'autre jour Mila
Cogna sa vitre, et m'appela.

Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

Les drôlesses sont fort gentilles ;
Leur poison qui m'ensorcela
Griserait Monsieur Orfila.

Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

J'aime l'amour et ses bisbillies,
J'aime Agnes, j'aime Paméla,
Lise en m'allumant se brûla.

Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

Jadis, quand je vis les mantilles,
De Suzette et de Zeila,
Mon âme à leurs plis se mêla.

Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

Amour, quand, dans l'ombre où tu brillas,
Tu coiffes de roses Lola,
Je me damnerais pour cela.

Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

Jeanne, à ton miroir tu t'habilles !
Mon cœur un beau jour s'envola ;
Je crois que c'est Jeanne qui l'a.

Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

Le soir, en sortant des quadrilles,
Je montre aux étoiles Stella,
Et je leur dis, regardez-la.

Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

Gavroche, while singing, was lavish of his pantomime, for gesture is the mainstay of a chorus. His face, an inexhaustible repertory of masks, made grimaces more convulsive and more fantastic than the mouths of a torn sheet in a stiff breeze. Un-

luckily, as he was alone and in the dark, this was neither seen nor visible. Much wealth is lost in this way. Suddenly he stopped short.

"We must interrupt the romance," he said.

His catlike eye had just distinguished inside a gateway what is called in painting an ensemble, that is to say, a being and a thing; the thing was a hand-cart, the being an Auvergnat sleeping inside it. The shafts of the cart were upon the pavement, and the Auvergnat's head leaned on the backboard of the truck. His body lay along this inclined plane, and his feet touched the ground. Gavroche, with his experience of the things of this world, recognized a drunkard: it was some street-corner porter who had drunk too much and was sleeping too much.

"Such is the use," Gavroche thought, "to which summer nights may be turned. The Auvergnat sleeps in his truck. I take the truck for the republic, and leave the Auvergnat for the monarchy."

His mind had just been illumined by this flash.

"That truck would be famous on our barricade?"

The Auvergnat was snoring. Gavroche gently pulled the truck behind and the Auvergnat in front, that is to say, by the feet, and in a second the porter was lying imperturbably flat on the pavement. The truck was liberated. Gavroche, accustomed constantly to face unexpected events, had always everything about him. He felt in one of his pockets and pulled out a scrap of paper and a piece of red pencil, stolen from some carpenter. He wrote

*"République Française
Received this truck."*

And he signed, GAVROCHE.

This done, he placed the paper in the snoring porter's velvet waistcoat pocket, seized the hand-cart, and started in the direction of the Halles, thrusting the truck before him at a gallop with a glorious triumphal row. This was dangerous, for there was a post at the Royal Printing Office, and Gavroche did not think of that. This post was held by suburban National Guards; a certain amount of alarm was beginning to arouse the squad, and heads were raised in the guard beds. Two lamps broken so shortly after each other, and this singing at the pitch of the lungs, were a good deal for these cowardly streets, which like to go to bed at sunset, and put the extinguisher on their candle at so early an hour. For an hour past the gamin had been making in this peaceful district the noise of a fly in a bottle. The suburban sergeant listened and waited, for he was a pru-

dent man. The wild rolling of the truck filled up the measure of possible awaiting, and determined the sergeant to attempt a reconnoissance.

"There must be a whole band of them," he said, "so we will advance gently."

It was clear that the hydra of anarchy had emerged from its box, and was playing the deuce in the quarter, so the sergeant ventured out of the guard-house on tip-toe. All at once, Gavroche, pushing his truck, found himself, just as he was turning out of the Rue des Vieilles-Haudriettes, face to face with a uniform, a shako, a pompon, and a musket. For the second time he stopped short.

"Hilloh," he said, "it's he. Good-day, public order."

Gavroche's surprises were short and rapidly thawed.

"Where are you going, scamp?" the sergeant cried.

"Citizen," said Gavroche, "I have not yet called you bourgeois, so why do you insult me?"

"Where are you going, scoundrel?"

"Sir," Gavroche continued, "it is possible that you were a man of sense yesterday, but you must have sent in your resignation this morning."

"I ask you where you are going, villain?"

Gavroche answered,—

"You speak politely. Really, no one would fancy you that age. You ought to sell your hair at one hundred francs a piece, and that would bring you in five hundred francs."

"Where are you going? where are you going? where are you going, bandit?"

Gavroche retorted,—

"Those are ugly words. The first time they give you the breast they ought to wash your mouth out better."

The sergeant levelled his bayonet.

"Will you tell me where you are going or not, wretch?"

"My general," said Gavroche, "I am going to fetch the doctor for my wife, who is taken in labour."

"To arms!" the sergeant shouted.

It is the masterpiece of powerful minds to save themselves by what has ruined them; and Gavroche measured the whole situation at a glance. It was the truck that had compromised him, and so the truck must now protect him. At the moment when the sergeant was going to rush on Gavroche, the truck, converted into a projectile and launched at full speed, rolled upon him furiously, and the sergeant, struck in the stomach, fell back into the gutter, while his musket was discharged in the air. On hearing their sergeant's cry, the guard hurried forth

pell-mell ; the shot produced a general discharge blindly, after which the guns were reloaded, and they began again. This blind-man's-buff firing lasted a good quarter of an hour, and killed sundry panes of glass. In the mean while, Gavroche, who had turned back, stopped five or six streets off, and sat down panting on the bench at the corner of the Enfants rouges, and listened. After breathing for a few minutes, he turned in the direction where the musketry was raging, raised his left hand to the level of his nose, and thrust it out thrice, while striking the back of his head with his right hand,—a sovereign gesture, in which the Parisian gamins have condensed French irony, and which is evidently effective, as it has already lasted more than half a century. This gaiety was troubled by a bitter reflection.

"Yes," he said, "I am delighted, I overflow with joy, I crack my sides, but I am losing my road, and shall be obliged to steer a roundabout course. I only hope I shall reach the barricade betimes."

After saying this he ran off again, and while running asked himself, "Where was I ?" and he began his song again, which gradually died out in the darkness of the streets.

Mais il reste encore des bastilles,
Et je vais mettre le holà
Dans l'ordre public que voilà.

Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

Quelqu'un veut-il jouer aux quilles ?
Tout le vieux monde s'écroula,
Quand la grosse boule roula.

Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

Vieux bon peuple, à coups de bêquilles,
Cassons ce Louvre où s'étala.
La monarchie en falbala.

Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

Nous en avons forcé les grilles,
Le roi Charles Dix ce jour-là
Tenait mal, et se décolla.

Où vont les belles filles,
Lon la.

The turn-out of the Guard produced some results, for a truck was captured and the drunkard made prisoner. The first was placed in the Green Yard, while the second was after-

wards brought before a court-martial as an accomplice. The public minister of that day displayed in this circumstance his indefatigable zeal in the defence of society. Gavroche's adventure, which has remained as a tradition in the Temple quarter, is one of the most terrible reminiscences of the old bourgeois of the Marais, and is entitled in their memory,—“The night attack on the guard-house of the Royal Printing-office.”

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE CHARYBDIS OF THE FAUBOURG ST ANTOINE.

THE two most memorable barricades which the observer of social diseases can mention do not belong to the period in which the action of this book is laid. These two barricades, both symbols under different aspects of a formidable situation, emerged from the earth during the fatal insurrection of June, 1848, the greatest street-war which history has seen. It happens sometimes that the canaille, that great despairing crowd, contrary to principles, even contrary to liberty, equality, and fraternity, even contrary to the universal vote, the Government of all by all, protests, in the depths of its agony, its discouragement, its denudation, its fevers, its distresses, its miasmas, its ignorance, and its darkness, and the populace offers battle to the people. The beggars attack the common right, the ochlocracy rises in insurrection against the demos. Those are mournful days; for there is always a certain amount of right even in this mania, there is suicide in this duel, and these words, intended to be insults, such as beggars, canaille, ochlocracy, and populace, prove, alas! rather the fault of those who reign than the fault of those who suffer; rather the fault of the privileged than the fault of the disinherited. For our part, we never pronounce these words without grief and respect, for when philosophy probes the facts with which they correspond it often finds much grandeur by the side of misery. Athens was an ochlocracy; the beggars produced Holland; the populace more than once saved Rome; and the canaille followed the Saviour. There is no thinker who has not at times contemplated the magnificence below. St Jerome doubtless thought of this canaille, of all these poor people, all these vagabonds, and all

the wretches whence the apostles and martyrs issued, when he uttered the mysterious words,—*Fæx urbis, lux orbis.*

The exasperations of this mob, which suffers and which bleeds, its unwilling violence against the principles which are its life, its assaults upon the right, are popular coups d'état, and must be repressed. The just man devotes himself, and through love for this very mob, combats it. But how excusable he finds it while resisting it; how he venerates it, even while opposing it! It is one of those rare moments in which a man while doing his duty feels something that disconcerts him, and almost recommends him not to go further; he persists, and must do so, but the satisfied conscience is sad, and the accomplishment of the duty is complicated by a contraction of the heart. June, 1848, was, let us hasten to say, a separate fact, and almost impossible to classify in the philosophy of history. All the words we have uttered must be laid aside when we have to deal with this extraordinary riot, in which the holy anxiety of labour claiming its right was felt. It must be combated, and it was a duty to do so, for it attacked the republic; but, in reality, what was June, 1848? a revolt of the people against itself. When the subject is not left out of sight there is no digression, and hence we may be permitted to concentrate the reader's attention momentarily upon the two absolutely unique barricades to which we have alluded, and which characterized this insurrection. The one blocked up the entrance to the Faubourg St Antoine, the other defended the approaches to the Faubourg du Temple; those before whom these two frightful masterpieces of civil war were raised in the dazzling June sun will never forget them.

The St Antoine barricade was monstrous, it was three storeys high and seven hundred feet in width. It barred from one corner to the other the vast mouth of the Faubourg, that is to say, three streets; ravined, slashed, serrated, surmounted by an immense jagged line, supported by piles which were themselves bastions, pushing out capes here and there, and powerfully reinforced by the two great promontories of the houses of the Faubourg, it rose like a Cyclopean wall at the back of the formidable square which had seen July 14. There were nineteen barricades erected in the streets behind the mother barricade, only, on seeing it, you felt in the Faubourg the immense agonizing suffering which had reached that extreme stage in which misery desires a catastrophe. Of what was this barricade made? of three six-storeyed houses demolished expressly some say, of the prodigy of all anger others say. It possessed

the lamentable aspect of all the buildings of hatred, ruin. You might ask who built this? and you might also ask who destroyed this? It was the improvisation of the ebullition. Here with that door, that grating, that awning, that chimney, that broken stove, that cracked stew-pan. Give us anything, throw everything in! push, roll, pick, dismantle, overthrow, and pull down everything! it was a collaboration of the pavement-stones, beams, iron-bars, planks, broken windows, unseated chairs, cabbage-stalks, rags, tatters, and curses. It was great and it was little, it was the abyss parodied on the square by the *tohu-bohu*. It was the mass side by side with the atom, a pulled-down wall and a broken pipkin, a menacing fraternization of all fragments, into which *Sisyphus* had cast his rock and *Job* his potsherds. Altogether it was terrible, it was the acropolis of the bare-footed. Overturned carts studded the slope, an immense wain spread out across it, with its wheels to the sky, and looked like a scar on this tumultuous façade, an omnibus gaily hoisted by strength of arm to the very top of the pile, as if the architects of this savage edifice had wished to add mockery to the horror, offered its bare pole to the horses of the air. This gigantic mound, the alluvium of the riot, represented to the mind an *Ossa* upon *Pelion* of all revolutions, '93 upon '89, the 9th Thermidor upon the 10th August, the 18th Brumaire upon January 21st, Vendemiaire upon Prairial, 1848 upon 1830. The square was worth the trouble, and this barricade was worthy of appearing upon the very spot whence the Bastille had disappeared. If the ocean made dykes it would build them in this way, and the fury of the tide was stamped on this shapeless encumbrance. What tide? the people. You fancied that you saw a petrified riot, and heard the enormous dark bees of violent progress, humming about this barricade as if they had their hive there. Was it a thicket? was it a Bacchanalian feast? was it a fortress? *Vertigo* seemed to have built it with the flapping of its wings. There was a sewer in this redoubt, and something Olympian in this mass. You saw there in a pell-mell full of desperation, gables of roofs, pieces of garrets with their painted paper, window-frames with all their panes planted in the confusion and awaiting the cannon, pulled down mantelpieces, chests of drawers, tables, benches, a howling overthrow, and those thousand wretched things cast away even by a beggar which contain at once fury and nothingness. It may be said that it was the rage of a people, rage of wood, of iron, of bronze, of stone, that the Faubourg St Antoine had swept them to their door with a gigantic broom, and made a barricade of their misery. Logs resembling executioners' blocks, anvil frames of

the shape of gallows, broken chairs, horizontal wheels emerging from the heap, produced on this edifice of anarchy the representation of the old punishment suffered by the people. The St Antoine barricade made a weapon of everything. All that civil war can throw at the head of society came from it ; it was not a fight but a paroxysm : the muskets which defended this redoubt, among which were several blunderbusses, discharged stones, bones, coat-buttons, and even the castors of night-commodes, very dangerous owing to the copper. This barricade was furious, it hurled an indescribable clamour into the clouds ; at certain moments when challenging the army it was covered with a crowd and a tempest, it had a prickly crest of guns, sabres, sticks, axes, pikes, and bayonets, a mighty red flag fluttered upon it in the breeze, and the cries of command, the songs of attack, the rolling of the drum, the sobs of women, and the sardonic laughter of men dying of starvation, could be heard there. It was immeasurable and living, and a flash of lightning issued from it as from the back of an electric animal. The spirit of revolution covered with its cloud this summit, where that voice of the people which resembles the voice of God was growling, and a strange majesty was disengaged from this Titanic mass of stones. It was a dungheap, and it was Sinai.

As we said above, it attacked in the name of the revolution, what ? the revolution. It, this barricade, an accident, a disorder, a misunderstanding, an unknown thing, had facing it the constituent assembly, the sovereignty of the people, universal suffrage, the nation, the republic : and it was the Carmagnole defying the Marseillaise. It was a mad but heroic challenge, for this old faubourg is a hero. The faubourg and its redoubt supported each other ; the redoubt formed the epaulement of the faubourg, and the redoubt leant upon the faubourg. The vast barricade was like a cliff against which the strategy of the African generals was broken. Its caverns, its excrescences, its warts, its humps, made grimaces, if we may employ the expression, and grinned behind the smoke. The grape-shot vanished in the shapeless heap ; shells buried themselves in it and were swallowed up ; cannon-balls only succeeded in forming holes, for of what use is it bombarding chaos ? and the regiments, accustomed to the sternest visions of war, gazed with anxious eye at this species of wild beast redoubt, which was a boar through its bristling and a mountain through its enormity.

A quarter of a league further on, at the corner of the Rue Vieille du Temple, which debouches on the boulevard near the Chateau d'Eau, if you boldly advanced your head beyond the

point formed by the projection of the magazine Dallemagne, you could see in the distance across the canal, and at the highest point of the ascent to Belleville, a strange wall rising to the second floor and forming a sort of connecting link between the houses on the right and those on the left, as if the street had folded back its highest wall in order to close itself up. This was built of paving-stones ; it was tall, straight, correct, cold, perpendicular, and levelled with the plumb-line and the square ; of course there was no cement, but, as in some Roman walls, this in no way disturbed its rigid architecture. From its height, its depth could be guessed, for the entablature was mathematically parallel to the basement. At regular distances almost invisible loopholes, resembling black threads, could be distinguished in the grey wall. This street was deserted throughout its length, and all the windows and doors were closed. In the background rose this bar, which converted the street into a blind alley ; it was a motionless and tranquil wall, no one was seen, nothing was heard, not a cry, nor a sound, nor a breath. It was a sepulchre. The dazzling June sun inundated this terrible thing with light,—it was the barricade of the Faubourg du Temple. So soon as you reached the ground and perceived it, it was impossible even for the boldest not to become pensive in the presence of this mysterious apparition. It was adjusted, clamped, imbricated, rectilinear, symmetrical, and funereal, and there were there science and darkness. You felt that the chief of this barricade was a geometrician or a spectre, and as you gazed you spoke in a whisper. From time to time if any one, private, officer, or representative of the people, ventured to cross the solitary road, a shrill faint whistling was heard, and the passer-by fell wounded or dead, or, if he escaped, a bullet could be seen to bury itself in some shutter, or the stucco of the wall. Sometimes it was a grape-shot, for the man of the barricade had made out of gas-pipes, stopped up at one end with tow and clay, two small cannon. There was no useless expenditure of gunpowder, and nearly every shot told. There were a few corpses here and there, and patches of blood on the pavement. I remember a white butterfly that fluttered up and down the street ; summer does not abdicate. All the gateways in the vicinity were crowded with corpses, and you felt in this street that you were covered by some one you could not see, and that the whole street was under the marksman's aim.

The soldiers of the attacking column, massed behind the species of ridge which the canal bridge forms at the entrance of the Faubourg du Temple, watched gravely and thoughtfully

this mournful redoubt, this immobility, this impassiveness, from which death issued. Some crawled on their stomachs to the top of the pitch of the bridge, while careful not to let their shakos pass beyond it. Brave Colonel Monteynard admired this barricade with a tremor. “*How it is built,*” he said to a representative, “*not a single paving-stone projects beyond the other. It is made of china.*” At this moment a bullet smashed the cross on his chest and he fell. “The cowards!” the troops shouted, “Why do they not show themselves? they dare not! they hide!” The barricade of the Faubourg du Temple, defended by eighty men, and attacked by ten thousand, held out for three days, and on the fourth day the troops acted as they had done at Zaatcha and Constantine,—they broke through houses, passed along roofs, and the barricade was taken. Not one of the eighty cowards dreamed of flying; all were killed with the exception of Barthelemy, the chief, to whom we shall allude directly. The barricade of St Antoine was the tumult of the thunder; the barricade of the Temple was the silence. There was between the two barricades the same difference as exists between the formidable and the sinister. The one seemed a throat, the other a mask. Admitting that the gigantic and dark insurrection of June was composed of a fury and an enigma, the dragon was seen in the first barricade and the sphynx behind the second.

These two fortresses were built by two men, Cournet and Barthelemy: Cournet made the St Antoine barricade, Barthelemy the Temple barricade, and each of them was the image of the man who built it. Cournet was a man of tall stature; he had wide shoulders, a red face, a smashing fist, a brave heart, a loyal soul, a sincere and terrible eye. He was intrepid, energetic, irascible, and stormy; the most cordial of men, and the most formidable of combatants. War, contest, medley were the air he breathed, and put him in good temper. He had been an officer in the navy, and from his gestures and his voice it could be divined that he issued from the ocean and came from the tempest; he continued the hurricane in battle. Omitting the geniuses, there was in Cournet something of Danton, as, omitting the divinity, there was in Danton something of Hercules. Barthelemy, thin, weak, pale, and taciturn, was a species of tragical gamin, who, having been struck by a policeman, watched for him, waited for him, and killed him, and at the age of seventeen was sent to the galleys. He came out and built this barricade. At a later date, when both were exiles in London, Barthelemy killed Cournet: it was a melancholy duel. Some time after that, Barthelemy, caught in the cog-wheels of one of those

mysterious adventures in which passion is mingled, catastrophes in which French justice sees extenuating circumstances, and English justice only sees death, was hanged. The gloomy social edifice is so built that, owing to maternal denudation and moral darkness, this wretched being, who had had an intellect, certainly firm and possibly great, began with the galleys in France and ended with the gibbet in England. Barthelemy only hoisted one flag,—it was the black one.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

SIXTEEN years count in the subterranean education of revolt, and June, 1848, knew a great deal more than June, 1832. Hence the barricade in the Rue de la Chanvrerie was only a sketch and an embryo, when compared with the two colossal barricades which we have just described, but for the period it was formidable. The insurgents, under the eye of Enjolras, for Marius no longer looked at anything, had turned the night to good account: the barricade had not only been repaired but increased. It had been raised two feet, and iron bars planted in the paving-stones resembled couched lances. All sorts of rubbish, added and brought from all sides, complicated the external confusion, and the redoubt had been cleverly converted into a wall inside and a thicket outside. The staircase of paving-stones, which allowed the top of the barricade to be reached, was restored, the ground-floor of the room of the inn was cleared out, the kitchen converted into an infirmary, the wounds were dressed, the powder, scattered about the tables and floor, was collected, bullets were cast, cartridges manufactured, lint plucked, the fallen arms distributed; the dead were carried off and laid in a heap, in the Mondétour lane, of which they were still masters. The pavement remained for a long time red at that spot. Among the dead were four suburban National Guards, and Enjolras ordered their uniforms to be laid on one side. Enjolras had advised two hours' sleep, and his advice was an order, still, only three or four took advantage of it, and Feuilly employed the two hours in engraving this inscription on the wall, facing the wine-shop,—

"LONG LIVE THE PEOPLES."

These four words, carved in the stone with a nail, could still be read on this wall in 1848. The three women took advantage of the respite to disappear entirely, which allowed the insurgents to breathe more at their ease; and they contrived to find refuge in some neighbouring house. Most of the wounded could and would still fight. There were, on a pile of mattresses and trusses of straw laid in the kitchen converted into an infirmary, five men seriously wounded, of whom two were Municipal Guards; the wounds of the latter were dressed first. No one remained in the ground-floor room, save Mabœuf under his black cere-cloth, and Javert fastened to the post.

"This is the charnel-house," said Enjolras.

In the interior of this room, which was scarce lighted by a solitary candle, the mortuary table at the end being behind the post like a horizontal bar, a sort of large vague cross resulted from Javert standing and Mabœuf lying down. Although the pole of the omnibus was mutilated by the bullets, sufficient remained for a flag to be attached to it. Enjolras, who possessed that quality of a chief of always doing what he said, fastened to it the bullet-pierced and blood-stained coat of the killed old man. No meal was possible, for there was neither bread nor meat. The fifty men during the sixteen hours they had stood at the barricade speedily exhausted the scanty provisions of the inn. At a given moment every barricade that holds out becomes the raft of the *Meduse*, and the combatants must resign themselves to hunger. They had reached the early hours of that Spartan day, June 6, when at the barricade of St Merry, Jeanne, surrounded by insurgents who cried for bread, answered, "What for? it is three o'clock, also at four we shall be dead." As they could no longer eat, Enjolras prohibited drinking; he put the wine under an interdict, and served out the spirits. Some fifteen full bottles, hermetically sealed, were found in the cellar, which Enjolras and Combeferre examined. Combeferre on coming up again said, "It belongs to Father Hucheloup's stock at the time when he was a grocer." "It must be real wine," Bossuet observed; "it is lucky that Grantaire is asleep, for, if he were up, we should have a difficulty in saving those bottles." Enjolras, in spite of the murmurs, put his veto on the fifteen bottles, and in order that no one might touch them, and that they should be to some extent sacred, he had placed them under the table on which Father Mabœuf lay.

At about two in the morning they counted their strength; there were still thirty-seven. Day was beginning to appear,

and the torch, which had been returned to its stone lantern, was extinguished. The interior of the barricade, that species of small yard taken from the street, was bathed in darkness, and resembled, through the vague twilight horror, the deck of a dismasted ship. The combatants moved about like black forms. Above this frightful nest of gloom the floors of the silent houses stood out lividly, and above them again the chimney-pots were assuming a roseate hue. The sky had that charming tint which may be white and may be blue, and the birds flew about in it with twitterings of joy. The tall house which formed the background of the barricade looked to the east, and had a pink reflection on its roof. At the third-floor window the morning breeze blew about the grey hair on the head of the dead man.

"I am delighted that the torch is put out," Courfeyrac said to Feuilly, "for that flame flickering in the breeze annoyed me, for it seemed to be frightened. The light of torches resembles the wisdom of cowards, it illuminates badly because it trembles."

The dawn arouses minds like birds, and all were talking. Joly, seeing a cat stalking along a gutter, extracted this philosophy from the fact.

"What is the cat?" he exclaimed, "it is a correction. Le bon Dieu having made a mouse, said to himself, 'Hilloh, I have done a foolish trick,' and he made the cat, which is the erratum of the mouse. The mouse plus the cat is the revised and corrected proof of creation."

Combeferre, surrounded by students and workmen, was talking of the dead, of Jean Prouvaire, of Bahorel, of Mabœuf, and even of Cabuc, and the stern sorrow of Enjolras. He said,—

"Harmodius and Aristogiton, Brutus, Chereas, Stephanus, Cromwell, Charlotte Corday, and Sand, all had their moment of agony after the blow was struck. Our heart is so quivering, and human life such a mystery, that even in a civic murder, even in a liberating murder, if there be such a thing, the remorse at having struck a man exceeds the joy of having benefited the human race."

And, such are the meanderings of exchanged words, a moment later, by a transition which came from Jean Prouvaire's verses, Combeferre was comparing together the translators of the Georgics, Raux with Cournand, Cournand with Delille, and pointing out the few passages translated by Malfilâtre, especially the prodigies on the death of Cæsar, and at that name the conversation reverted to Brutus.

"Cæsar," said Combeferre, "fell justly. Cicero was severe to

Cæsar, and was in the right, for such severity is not a Diatribe. When Zoilus insults Homer, when Mœvius insults Virgil, when Visé insults Molière, when Pope insults Shakspere, when Fréron insults Voltaire, it is an old law of envy and hatred being carried out ; for genius attracts insult, and great men are all barked at more or less. But Zoilus and Cicero are different. Cicero is a justiciary with thought in the same way as Brutus is a justiciary with the sword. For my part, I blame that last justice, the glaive ; antiquity allowed it. Cæsar, the violator of the Rubicon, conferring, as if coming from him, dignities that came from the people, and not rising on the entrance of the senate, behaved, as Eutropius said, like a king, and almost like a tyrant, *regiā ac pænè tyrannicā*. He was a great man, all the worse or all the better, the lesson is the more elevated. His three-and-twenty wounds affect me less than the spitting on the brow of Christ. Cæsar is stabbed by the senators, Christ is buffeted by soldiers. The God is seen in the greater amount of the outrage.”

Bossuet, standing on a pile of stones, and commanding the speaker, exclaimed, gun in hand,—

“ Oh ! Cydathenæum, oh ! Myrrhinus, oh ! Probalynthus ! oh ! graces of Eanthus ! oh ! who will give me the power to utter, to pronounce the verses of Homer like a Greek of Laureum or Edapteon ! ”

Enjolras had gone out to reconnoitre, and had left by the Mondétour lane, keeping in the shadow of the houses. The insurgents, we must state, were full of hope : the way in which they had repulsed the night attack almost made them disdain beforehand the attack at daybreak. They waited for it and smiled at it, and no more doubted of their success than of their cause ; moreover, help was evidently going to reach them, and they reckoned on it. With that facility of triumphant prophecy which is a part of the strength of the combating Frenchman, they divided into three certain phases the opening day,—at six in the morning a regiment, which had been worked upon, would turn ; at mid-day insurrection all over Paris ; at sunset the revolution. The tocsin of St Merry, which had not ceased once since the previous evening, could be heard, and this was a proof that the other barricade, the great one, Jeanne’s, still held out. All these hopes were interchanged by the groups with a species of gay and formidable buzzing, which resemble the war-hum of a swarm of bees. Enjolras reappeared returning from his gloomy walk in the external darkness. He listened for a moment to all this joy with his arms folded, and then said, fresh and rosy in the growing light of dawn,—

“ The whole army of Paris is out, and one-third of that army

is preparing to attack the barricade behind which you now are. There is, too, the National Guard. I distinguished the shakos of the fifth line regiment, and the guidons of the sixth legion. You will be attacked in an hour; as for the people, they were in a state of ferment yesterday, but this morning do not stir. There is nothing to wait for, nothing to hope; no more a faubourg than a regiment. You are abandoned."

These words fell on the buzzing groups, and produced the same effect as the first drops of a storm do on a swarm. All remained dumb, and there was a moment of inexpressible silence, in which death might have been heard flying past. This moment was short, and a voice shouted to Enjolras from the thickest of the crowd,—

"Be it so. Let us raise the barricade to a height of twenty feet, and all fall upon it. Citizens, let us offer the protest of corpses, and show that if the people abandon the republicans the republicans do not abandon the people."

These words disengaged the thoughts of all from the painful cloud of individual anxieties, and an enthusiastic shout greeted them. The name of the man who spoke thus was never known; he was some unknown blouse-wearer, an unknown man, a forgotten man, a passing hero, that great anonymous always mixed up in human crises and social Geneses, who at the given moment utters the decisive word in a supreme fashion, and who fades away into darkness, after having represented for a minute, in the light of a flash, the people and God. This inexorable resolution was so strongly in the air of June 6, 1832, that almost at the same hour the insurgents of the St Merry barricade uttered this cry, which became historical,—"Whether they come to our help, or whether they do not, what matter! Let us all fall here, to the last man." As we see, the two barricades, though materially isolated, communicated.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

FIVE LESS AND ONE MORE.

AFTER the man, whoever he might be, who decreed the "protest of corpses," had spoken, and given the formula of the common soul, a strangely satisfied and terrible cry issued from

every mouth, funereal in its meaning, and triumphal in its accent.

“ Long live death ! Let us all remain here.”

“ Why all ? ” Enjolras asked.

“ All, all ! ”

Enjolras continued,—

“ The position is good and the barricade fine. Thirty men are sufficient, then why sacrifice forty ? ”

They replied,—

“ Because not one of us will go away.”

“ Citizens,” Enjolras cried, and there was in his voice an almost irritated vibration, “ the republic is not rich enough in men to make an unnecessary outlay. If it be the duty of some to go away, that duty must be performed like any other.”

Enjolras, the man-principle, had that species of omnipotence which is evolved from the absolute over his co-religionists. Still, however great that omnipotence might be, they murmured. A chief to the tips of his fingers, Enjolras, on seeing that they murmured, insisted. He continued haughtily,—

“ Let those who are afraid to be only thirty say so.”

The murmurs were redoubled.

“ Besides,” a voice in the throng remarked, “ it is easy to say, Go away, but the barricade is surrounded.”

“ Not on the side of the Halles,” said Enjolras. “ The Rue Mondétour is free, and the Marché des Innocents can be reached by the Rue des Prêcheurs.”

“ And then,” another voice in the group remarked, “ we should be caught by falling in with some grand rounds of the line or the National Guard. They will see a man passing in blouse and cap ; ‘ Where do you come from ? don’t you belong to the barricade ? ’ and they will look at your hands, you smell of powder, and will be shot.”

Enjolras, without answering, touched Combeferre’s shoulder, and both entered the ground-floor room. They came out again a moment after, Enjolras holding in his outstretched hands the four uniforms which he had laid on one side, and Combeferre followed him carrying the cross-belts and shakos.

“ In this uniform,” Enjolras said, “ it is easy to enter the ranks and escape. Here are four at any rate.”

And he threw the four uniforms on the unpaved ground ; but as no one moved in the stoical audience Combeferre resolved to make an appeal.

“ Come,” he said, “ you must show a little pity. Do you know what the question is here ? it is about women. Look you, are there wives, yes or no ? are there children, yes or no ?

are these nothing, who rock a cradle with their foot, and have a heap of children around them? let he among you who has never seen a nurse's breast hold up his hand. Ah, you wish to be killed. I wish it too, I who am addressing you, but I do not wish to feel the ghosts of women twining their arms around me. Die,—very good, but do not cause people to die. Suicides like the one which is about to take place here are sublime, but suicide is restricted and does not allow of extension, and so soon as it affects your relations, suicide is called murder. Think of the little fair heads, and think too of the white hair. Listen to me,—Enjolras tells me that just now he saw at the corner of the Rue du Cygne a candle at a poor window on the fifth floor, and on the panes the shaking shadow of an old woman who appeared to have spent the night in watching at the window; she is perhaps the mother of one of you. Well, let that man go, and hasten to say to his mother,—‘Mother, here I am !’ Let him be easy in his mind, for the work will be done here all the same. When a man supports his relatives by his toil, he has no longer any right to sacrifice himself, for that is deserting his family. And then, too, those who have daughters, and those who have sisters! only think of them. You let yourselves be killed, you are dead, very good; and to-morrow? it is terrible when girls have no bread, for a man begs, but a woman sells. Oh, those charming, graceful, and gentle creatures with flowers in their caps, who fill the house with chastity, who sing, who prattle, who are like a living perfume, who prove the existence of angels in heaven by the purity of virgins on earth, that Jeanne, that Lise, that Mimi, those adorable and honest creatures, who are your blessing and your pride,—ah, my God! they will starve. What would you have me say to you? There is a human flesh-market, and you will not prevent them entering it with your shadowy hands trembling around them. Think of the street, think of the pavement covered with strollers, think of the shops before which women in low-necked dresses come and go in the mud. Those women, too, were pure. Think of your sisters, you who have any; misery, prostitution, the police. Saint Lazare, that is what these delicate maidens, these fragile marvels of chastity, modesty, and beauty, fresher than the lilies in May, will fall to; ah! you have let yourselves be killed! ah! you are no longer there! That is, very good, you have wished to withdraw the people from royalty, and you give your daughters to the police. My friends, take care and have compassion; we are not wont to think much about women, hapless women, we trust to the fact that women have not received the education of men. They are prevented reading,

thinking, or occupying themselves with politics ; but will you prevent them going to-night to the Morgue and recognizing your corpses ? Come, those who have families must be good fellows, and shake our hand and go away, leaving us to do the job here all alone. I am well aware that courage is needed to go away, and that it is difficult, but the more difficult the more meritorious it is. You say, ‘I have a gun and am at the barricade ; all the worse, I remain.’ All the worse is easily said. My friends, there is a morrow, and that morrow you will not see, but your families will see it. And what sufferings ! Stay, do you know what becomes of a healthy child with cheeks like an apple, who chatters, prattles, laughs, and smiles as fresh as a kiss, when he is abandoned ? I saw one, quite little, about so high ; his father was dead and poor people had taken him in through charity, but they had not bread for themselves. The child was always hungry ; it was winter-time, but though he was always hungry he did not cry. He was seen to go close to the stove, whose pipe was covered with yellow earth. The boy detached with his fingers a piece of this earth and ate it,—his breathing was hoarse, his face livid, his legs soft, and his stomach swollen. He said nothing, and when spoken to made no answer. He is dead, and was brought to die at the Necker hospice, where I saw him, for I was a student there. Now, if there be any fathers among you, fathers who take a delight in taking a walk on Sunday, holding in their powerful hand a child’s small fingers, let each of these fathers fancy this lad his own. The poor brat I can remember perfectly ; I fancy I see him now, and when he lay on the dissecting table, his bones stood out under his skin like the tombs under the grass of a cemetery. We found a sort of mud in his stomach, and he had ashes between his teeth. Come, let us examine our conscience and take the advice of our heart ; statistics prove that the mortality among deserted children is fifty-five per cent. I repeat, it is a question of wives, of mothers, of daughters, and babes. Am I saying anything about you ? I know very well what you are. I know that you are all brave. I know that you have all in your hearts the joy and glory of laying down your lives for the great cause. I know very well that you feel yourselves chosen to die usefully and magnificently, and that each of you clings to his share of the triumph. Very good. But you are not alone in this world, and there are other beings of whom you must think ; you should not be selfish.”

All hung their heads with a gloomy air, strange contradictions of the human heart in the sublimest moments ! Combe-ferre, who spoke thus, was not an orphan, he remembered the

mothers of others and forgot his own, he was going to let himself be killed, and was "selfish." Marius, fasting and feverish, who had successively given up all hope, cast ashore on grief, the most mournful of shipwrecks, saturated with violent emotions, and feeling the end coming, had buried himself deeper and deeper in that visionary stupor which ever precedes the fatal and voluntarily accepted hour. A physiologist might have studied on him the growing symptoms of that febrile absorption which is known and classified by science, and which is to suffering what voluptuousness is to pleasure, for despair also has its ecstasy. Marius had attained that stage; as we have said, things which occurred before him appeared to him remote, he distinguished the ensemble, but did not perceive the details. He saw people coming and going before him in a flash, and he heard voices speaking as if from the bottom of an abyss. Still this affected him, for there was in this scene a point which pierced to him and aroused him. He had but one idea, to die, and he did not wish to avert his attention from it, but he thought in his gloomy somnambulism that in destroying himself he was not prohibited from saving somebody. He raised his voice,—

"Enjolras and Combeferre are right," he said, "let us have no useless sacrifice. I join them, and we must make haste. Combeferre has told you decisive things: there are men among you who have families, mothers, sisters, wives, and children. Such must leave the ranks."

Not a soul stirred.

"Married men and supporters of families will leave the ranks," Marius repeated.

His authority was great, for, though Enjolras was really the chief of the barricade, Marius was its saviour.

"I order it," Enjolras cried.

"I implore it," Marius said.

Then these heroic men, stirred up by Combeferre's speech, shaken by Enjolras' order, and moved by Marius' entreaty, began denouncing one another. "It is true," a young man said to a grown-up man, "you are a father of a family; begone!" "No! you ought to do so rather," the man replied, "for you have two sisters to support;" and an extraordinary contest broke out, in which each struggled not to be thrust out of the tomb.

"Make haste," said Combeferre, "in a quarter of an hour there will no longer be time."

"Citizens," Enjolras added, "we have a republic here, and universal suffrage reigns. Point out yourselves the men who are to leave us."

They obeyed, and at the end of a few minutes five were unanimously pointed out and left the ranks.

"There are five of them!" Marius exclaimed.

There were only four uniforms.

"Well," the five replied, "one will have to remain behind."

And then came who should remain, and who should find reasons for others not to remain. The generous quarrel began again.

"You have a wife who loves you—you have your old mother—you have neither father nor mother; so what will become of your three little brothers?—you are the father of five children—you have a right to live, for you are only seventeen, and it is too early to die."

These great revolutionary barricades were meeting-places of heroisms. The improbable was simple there, and these men did not astonish one another.

"Make haste," Courfeyrac repeated.

Cries to Marius came from the groups.

"You must point out the one who is to remain."

"Yes!" the five said, "do you choose, and we will obey you."

Marius did not believe himself capable of any emotion; still at this idea of choosing a man for death all the blood flowed back to his heart, and he would have turned pale could he have grown paler. He walked up to the five, who smiled upon him, and each, with his eye full of that great flame which gleams through history on Thermopylæ, cried to him,—

"I! I! I!"

And Marius stupidly counted them. There were still five! then his eyes settled on the four uniforms. All at once a fifth uniform fell, as if from heaven, on the other four; the fifth man was saved. Marius raised his eyes, and recognized M. Fauchelevent. Jean Valjean had just entered the barricade; either through information he had obtained, through instinct, or through accident, he arrived by the Mondétour lane, and, thanks to his National Guard uniform, passed without difficulty. The vedette stationed by the insurgents in the Rue Mondétour had no cause to give the alarm signal for a single National Guard, and had let him enter the street, saying to himself, "He is probably a reinforcement, or at the worst a prisoner." The moment was too serious for a sentry to turn away from his duty or his post of observation. At the moment when Jean Valjean entered the redoubt, no one noticed him, for all eyes were fixed on the five chosen men and the four uniforms. Jean Valjean, however, had seen and heard,

and silently took off his coat and threw it on the pile formed by the other coats. The emotion was indescribable.

"Who is this man?" Bossuet asked.

"He is a man," Combeferre replied, "who saves his fellow-man."

Marius added in a grave voice,—

"I know him."

This bail was sufficient for all, and Enjolras turned to Jean Valjean.

"Citizen, you are welcome."

And he added,—

"You are aware that you will die."

Jean Valjean, without answering, helped the man he was saving to put on his uniform.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE PROSPECT FROM A BARRICADE.

THE situation of the whole party in this fatal hour, and at this inexorable spot, had as resultant and apex the supreme melancholy of Enjolras. Enjolras had within him the plenitude of the revolution; he was imperfect, however, so far as the absolute can be so, he had too much of St Just and not enough of Anacharsis Clootz; still his mind, in the society of the friends of the A, B, C, had eventually received a certain magnetism of Combeferre's ideas. For some time past he had been gradually emerging from the narrow form of dogmatism and yielding to the expansion of progress, and in the end he had accepted, as the definitive and magnificent evolution, the transformation of the great French republic into the immense human republic. As for the immediate means, from a violent situation, he wished them to be violent, in that he did not vary, and he still belonged to that epic and formidable school which is resumed in the words "'93." Enjolras was standing on the paving-stone steps, with one of his elbows on the muzzle of his gun. He was thinking, he trembled, as men do when a blast passes, for spots where death lurks produce this tripod effect. A sort of stifled fire issued from beneath his eyelashes, which were full of the internal glance. All at once he raised his head, his light hair fell back like that

of the angel on the dark quadriga composed of stars, and he cried :—

“ Citizens, do you represent the future to yourselves ? the streets of towns inundated with light, green branches on the thresholds, nations sisters, men just, old men blessing children, the past loving the present, men thinking at perfect liberty, believers enjoying perfect equality, for religion, heaven, God, the direct priest, the human conscience converted into an altar, no more hatred, the fraternity of the workshop and the school, notoriety the sole punishment and reward, work for all, right for all, peace for all, no more bloodshed, no more wars, and happy mothers ! To subdue the matter is the first step, to realize the ideal is the second. Reflect on what progress has already done ; formerly the first human races saw with terror the hydra that breathed upon the waters, the dragon that vomited fire, the griffin which was the monster of the air, and which flew with the wings of an eagle and the claws of a tiger, pass before their eyes, frightful beasts which were below man. Man, however, set his snares, the sacred snares of intellect, and ended by catching the monsters in them. We have subdued the hydra, and it is called the steamer ; we have tamed the dragon, and it is called the locomotive ; we are on the point of taming the griffin, we hold it already, and it is called the balloon. The day on which that Promethean task is terminated and man has definitively attached to his will the triple antique chimera, the dragon, the hydra, and the griffin, he will be master of water, fire, and air, and he will be to the rest of animated creation what the ancient gods were formerly to him. Courage, and forward ! Citizens, whither are we going ? to science made the government, to the strength of things converted into the sole public strength, to the natural law having its sanction and penalty in itself, and promulgating itself by evidence, and to a sunrise of truth corresponding with the dawn of day. We are proceeding to a union of the peoples ; we are proceeding to a unity of man. No more fictions, no more parasites. The real governed by the true is our object. Civilization will hold its assize on the summit of Europe, and eventually in the centre of the continent, in a great Parliament of intellect. Something like this has been seen already ; the Amphictyons held two sessions a year, one at Delphi, the place of the gods, the other at Thermopylæ, the place of souls. Europe will have her Amphictyons, the globe will have its Amphictyons, France bears the sublime future within her, and this is the gestation of the 19th century. What Greece sketched out is worthy of being finished by France. Listen to

me. Feuilly, valiant workman, man of the people, man of the people, I venerate thee ; yes, thou seest clearly future times, yes, thou art right. Thou hast neither father nor mother, Feuilly, and thou hast adopted humanity as thy mother and right as thy father. Thou art about to die here, that is to say, to triumph. Citizens, whatever may happen to-day, we are about to make a revolution, by our defeat as well as by our victory. In the same way as fires light up a whole city, revolutions light up the whole human race. And what a revolution shall we make ? I have just told you, the revolution of the True. From the political point of view, there is but one principle, the sovereignty of man over himself. This sovereignty of me over me is called liberty, and where two or three of these liberties are associated the State begins. But in this association there is no abdication, and each sovereignty concedes a certain amount of itself to form the common right. This quality is the same for all, and this identity of concession which each makes to all, is called Equality. The common right is nought but the protection of all radiating over the right of each. This protection of all over each is termed Fraternity. The point of intersection of all aggregated societies is called Society, and this intersection being a junction, the point is a knot. Hence comes what is called the social tie ; some say the social contract, which is the same thing, as the word contract is etymologically formed with the idea of a tie. Let us come to an understanding about equality, for if liberty be the summit, equality is the base. Equality, citizens, is not the whole of society on a level, a society of tall blades of grass and small oaks, or a number of entangled jealousies ; it is, civilly, every aptitude having the same opening ; politically, all votes having the same weight, and religiously, all consciences having the same right. Equality has an organ in gratuitous and compulsory education, and it should begin with the right to the alphabet. The primary school imposed on all, the secondary school offered to all, such is the law, and from the identical school issues equal instruction. Yes, instruction ! light, light ! everything comes from light and everything returns to it. Citizens, the 19th century is great, but the 20th century will be happy. Then there will be nothing left resembling ancient history, there will be no cause to fear, as at the present day, a conquest, an invasion, usurpation, an armed rivalry of nations, an interruption of civilization depending on a marriage of kings, a birth in hereditary tyrannies, a division of peoples by Congress, a dismemberment by the collapse of dynasties, a combat of two religions, clashing like

two goats of the darkness, on the bridge of infinity ; there will be no cause longer to fear famine, exhaustion, prostitution through destiny, misery through stoppage of work, and the scaffold, and the sword, and battles; and all the brigandage of accident in the forest of events ; we might almost say there will be no more events, we shall be happy ; the human race will accomplish its law as the terrestrial globe does its law ; harmony will be restored between the soul and the planet, and the soul will gravitate round the truth as the planet does round light. Friends, the hour we are now standing in is a gloomy hour, but there are such terrible purchases of the future. Oh ! the human race will be delivered, relieved, and consoled ! We affirm it on this barricade, and where should the cry of love be raised if not on the summit of the sacrifice ? Oh, my brothers, this is the point of junction between those who think and those who suffer, this barricade is not made of paving-stones, beams, and iron bars, it is made of two aggregations, one of ideas and one of sufferings. Misery meets then the ideal ; day embraces the night there, and says to it, I am about to die with thee, and thou wilt be born again with me. Faith springs from the embrace of all the desolations ; sufferings bring hither their agony and ideas their immortality. This agony and this immortality are about to be mingled and compose one death. Brothers, the man who dies here dies in the radiance of the future, and we shall enter a tomb all filled with dawn."

Enjolras interrupted himself, rather than was silent ; his lips moved silently as if he were talking to himself, which attracted attention, and in order still to try to hear him they held their tongues. There was no applause, but they whispered together for a long time. Language being breath, the rustling of intellects resembles the rustling of leaves.

Let us describe what was going on in Marius's thoughts : our readers will remember his state of mind, for, as we just now said, everything was only a vision to him. His appreciation was troubled, for he was (we urge the fact) beneath the shadow of the great gloomy wings opened above the dying. He felt that he had entered the tomb, he fancied that he was already on the other side of the wall, and he only saw the faces of the living with the eyes of a dead man. How was M. Fauchevant present ? why was he here, and what did he come to do ? Marius did not ask himself all these questions. Moreover, as our despair has the peculiar thing about it that it envelopes others as it does ourselves, it appeared to him logical that everybody should die. Still he thought of Cosette with a

contraction of the heart. However, M. Fauchelevant did not speak to him, did not look at him, and did not even seem to hear Marius when he raised his voice, saying, "I know him." As for Marius, this attitude of M. Fauchelevant relieved him, and if such a word were permissible for such impressions, we might say that it pleased him. He had ever felt an absolute impossibility in addressing this enigmatical man, who was at once equivocal and imposing to him. It was a very long time too since he had seen him; and this augmented the impossibility for a timid and reserved nature like Marius's.

The five men selected left the barricade by the Mondétour lane, perfectly resembling National Guards. One of them wept as he went away, and before doing so they embraced those who remained. When the five men sent back to life had left Enjolras thought of the one condemned to death. He went to the ground-floor room, where Javert, tied to the post, was reflecting.

"Do you want anything?" Enjolras asked him.

Javert answered,—

"When will you kill me?"

"Wait. We require all our cartridges at this moment."

"In that case, give me some drink," Javert said.

Enjolras himself held out to him a glass of water, and, as Javert was bound, helped him to drink.

"Is that all?" Enjolras resumed.

"I feel uncomfortable at this post," Javert replied; "you did not act kindly in leaving me fastened to it the whole night. Bind me as you please, but you might surely lay me on a table, like the other man."

And with a nod of the head he pointed to M. Mabœuf's corpse. It will be remembered that there was at the end of the room a long wide table on which bullets had been run and cartridges made. All the cartridges being made, and all the powder expended, this table was free. By Enjolras's order four insurgents unfastened Javert from the post, and while they did so a fifth held a bayonet to his chest. His hand remained fastened behind his back, a thin strong cord was attached to his feet, which enabled him to walk fifteen inches, like those who are going to ascend the scaffold, and he was forced to walk to the table at the end of the room, on which they laid him, securely fastened round the waist. For greater security, a system of knotting was employed by means of a cord fastened to the neck, which rendered any escape impossible; it was the sort of fastening called in prisons a martingale, which starts from the nape of the neck, is crossed on the stomach, and is turned

round the hands after passing between the legs. While Javert was being bound a man standing in the door-way regarded him with singular attention, and the shadow this man cast caused Javert to turn his head. He raised his eyes and recognized Jean Valjean, but he did not even start, he merely looked down haughtily, and restricted himself to saying, "It is quite simple."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE ARTILLERY SETS TO WORK.

DAY grew rapidly, but not a window opened, not a door was ajar; it was the dawn, not an awaking. The end of the Rue de la Chanvrerie opposed to the barricade had been evacuated by the troops, as we stated; it appeared to be free and open for passers-by with sinister tranquillity. The Rue St Denis was dumb as the Avenue of the Sphynxes at Thebes; there was not a living being on the square, which a sunbeam whitened. Nothing is so melancholy as this brightness of deserted streets, nothing could be seen, but something could be heard, and there was a mysterious movement at a certain distance off. It was evident that the critical moment was arriving, and, as on the previous evening, the vedettes fell back, but this time all of them did so. The barricade was stronger than at the prior attack, for since the departure of the five it had been heightened. By the advice of the vedette who had been watching the region of the Halles, Enjolras, through fear of a surprise in the rear, formed a serious resolution. He barricaded the small passage of the Mondétour lane, which had hitherto remained free, and for this purpose a further portion of the street was unpaved. In this way the barricade, walled in on three sides—in front by the Rue de la Chanvrerie, on the left by the Rue du Cygne, and on the right by the Rue Mondétour—was truly almost impregnable, but it is true that they were fatally enclosed within it. It had three fronts but no issue, it was a fortress but a mouse-trap, as Courfeyrac said with a smile. Enjolras had some thirty paving-stones piled up by the door of the inn, which, as Bossuet said, have been "removed over and above." The silence was now so profound in the direction whence the attack must come, that Enjolras ordered all his men to return to their fighting-posts, and a ration of brandy was distributed to each man.

Nothing is more curious than a barricade preparing for an assault ; every man chooses his place, as at the theatre. They crowd, elbow and shoulder one another, and some make stalls of paving-stones. Here an angle of the wall is in the way, and it is removed ; there is a redan which may offer protection, and they seek shelter in it. Left-handed men are precious, for they take places inconvenient for others. Many arrange so as to fight seated, for they wish to be at their ease to kill, and comfortable in dying. In the fatal war of June, 1848, an insurgent, who was a wonderful marksman, and who fought from a terraced roof, had a Voltaire easy-chair carried there, and was knocked over in it by a volley of grape-shot. So soon as the chief has given the signal for action all disorderly movements cease ; there is no longer any sharp-shooting, any conversations or asides : all that minds contain converges, and is changed into the expectation of the assailant. A barricade before danger is a chaos, in danger discipline, for peril produces order. So soon as Enjolras had taken his double-barrelled gun, and placed himself at a species of parapet which he reserved for himself, all were silent ; a quick sharp crackling ran confusedly along the wall of paving-stones ; it was the muskets being cocked. However, the attitudes were haughtier and more confident than ever, for an excess of sacrifice is a strengthening, and though they no longer had hope, they had despair—despair, that last weapon, which at times gives victory, as Virgil tells us. Supreme resources issue from extreme resolutions. To embark on death is at times the means of escaping the shipwreck, and the cover of the coffin becomes a plank of salvation. As on the previous evening, all their attention was turned upon the end of the street, which was now lighted up and visible. They had not long to wait ere the movement began again, distinctly in the direction of St Leu, but it did not resemble the sound of the first attack. A rattling of chains, the alarming rolling of a heavy weight, a clang of bronze leaping on the pavement, and a species of solemn noise, announced that a sinister engine was approaching ; there was a tremor in the entrails of these old peaceful streets, pierced and built for the fruitful circulation of interests and ideas, and which are not made for the monstrous rolling of the wheels of war. The fixity of the eyes turned toward the end of the street became stern, as a cannon appeared. The gunners pushed the gun on ; the limber was detached, and two men supported the carriage, while four were at the wheels, others followed with the tumbril, and the lighted match could be seen smoking.

“Fire !” shouted Enjolras.

The whole barricade burst into a flame, and the detonation was frightful ; an avalanche of smoke covered and concealed the gun and the men. A few seconds after the cloud was dispersed, and the gun and the men reappeared ; the gunners were bringing it up to the front of the barricade, slowly, correctly, and without hurry, not one had been wounded. Then the captain of the gun, hanging with his whole weight on the breech to elevate the muzzle, began pointing the gun, with the gravity of an astronomer setting a telescope.

“Bravo for the artillery !” cried Bossuet.

And all the men at the barricade clapped their hands. A moment after the gun, standing in the very centre of the street across the gutter, was in position, and a formidable mouth yawned at the barricade.

“Come, we are going to be gay,” said Courfeyrac, “here is the brutality ; after the fillip the blow with the fist. The army is extending its heavy paw toward us, and the barricade is going to be seriously shaken. The musketry fire feels, and the cannon takes.”

“It is an eight-pounder of the new pattern in bronze,” Combeferre added. “Those guns, if the proportion of ten parts of tin to one hundred of copper is exceeded, are liable to burst, for the excess of tin renders them too soft. It thus happens that they have holes and cavities in the vent, and in order to obviate this danger and be able to load, it would perhaps be advisable to revert to the process of the fourteenth century, circling and reinforcing the gun with a series of steel rings, without any welding from the breech to the trunnions. In the mean while they remedy the defect as well as they can, and they manage to discover where the holes are in the vent of the gun by means of a searcher ; but there is a better method in Griebeauval’s moveable star.”

“In the sixteenth century,” Bossuet observed, “guns were rifled.”

“Yes,” Combeferre replied, “that augments the ballistic force, but lessens the correctness of aim. At short distances the trajectory has not all the desirable rigidness, the parabola is exaggerated, the path of the projectile is not sufficiently rectilinear for it to hit intermediate objects, though that is a condition of fighting whose importance grows with the proximity of the enemy and the precipitation of the firing. This defective tension of the curve of the projectile in rifled cannon of the sixteenth century emanated from the weakness of the charge ; weak charges for such engines are imposed by the ballistic necessities, such, for instance, as the preservation of the carriage.

After all, the cannon, that despot, cannot do all that it wishes, and strength is a great weakness. A cannon-ball only goes six hundred leagues an hour, while light covers seventy thousand leagues per second. Such is the superiority of our Saviour over Napoleon."

"Reload your guns," said Enjolras.

In what manner would the revetment of the barricade behave against a cannon-ball? would a breach be formed? that was the question. While the insurgents were reloading their guns the artillerymen loaded the cannon. The anxiety within the redoubt was profound; the shot was fired, and the detonation burst forth.

"Present!" a joyous voice cried.

And at the same time as the cannon-ball struck the barricade, Gavroche bounded inside it. He came from the direction of the Rue du Cygne, and actively clambered over the accessory barricade which fronted the labyrinth of the little Truanderie. Gavroche produced greater effect at the barricade than the cannon-ball did; for the latter was lost in the heap of rubbish. It had broken a wheel of the omnibus, and finished the old truck, on seeing which the insurgents burst into a laugh.

"Pray go on," Bossuet cried to the gunners.

Gavroche was surrounded, but he had no time to report anything, as Marius, shuddering, drew him on one side.

"What have you come to do here?"

"What a question?" the boy said, "and you, pray?"

And he gazed fixedly at Marius with his epic effrontery: his eyes were dilated by the proud brightness which they contained. It was with a stern accent that Marius continued,—

"Who told you to return? I only trust that you have delivered my letter at its address."

Gavroche felt some degree of remorse in the matter of the letter; for, in his hurry to return to the barricade, he had got rid of it rather than delivered it. He was forced to confess to himself that he had confided somewhat too lightly in this stranger, whose face he had not even been able to distinguish. It is true that this man was bareheaded, but that was not enough. In short, he reproached himself quietly for his conduct, and feared Marius' reproaches. He took the simplest process to get out of the scrape,—he told an abominable falsehood.

"Citizen, I delivered the letter to the porter. The lady was asleep, and she will have the letter when she wakes."

Marius had two objects in sending the letter,—to bid Colette farewell and save Gavroche. He was obliged to satisfy

himself with one half of what he wanted. The connection between the sending of the letter and M. Fauchelevant's presence at the barricade occurred to his mind, and he pointed him out to Gavroche.

"Do you know that man?"

"No," said Gavroche.

Gavroche, in truth, as we know, had only seen Jean Valjean by night. The troubled and sickly conjectures formed in Marius' mind were dissipated; did he know M. Fauchelevant's opinions? perhaps he was a republican. Hence his presence in the action would be perfectly simple. In the mean while, Gavroche had run to the other end of the barricade, crying, "My gun!" and Courfeyrac ordered it to be given to him. Gavroche warned "his comrades," as he called them, that the barricade was invested; and he had found great difficulty in reaching it. A battalion of the line, with their arms piled in the little Truanderie, was observing on the side of the Rue du Petit Cygne, on the opposite side the Municipal Guard occupied the Rue des Prêcheurs, while in front of them they had the main body of the army. This information given, Gavroche added,—

"I authorize you to give them a famous pill."

Enjolras was in the mean while watching at his loop-hole with open ears; for the assailants, doubtless little satisfied with the gun-shot, had not repeated it. A company of line infantry had come up to occupy the extremity of the street behind the gun. The soldiers unpaved the street, and erected with the stones a small low wall, a species of epaulement, only eighteen inches high, and facing the barricade. At the left-hand angle of this work could be seen the head of a suburban column, massed in the Rue St Denis. Enjolras, from his post, fancied he could hear the peculiar sound produced by canister when taken out of its box, and he saw the captain of the gun change his aim and turn the gun's muzzle slightly to the left. Then the gunners began loading, and the captain of the gun himself took the port-fire and walked up to the vent.

"Fall on your knees all along the barricade," Enjolras shouted.

The insurgents, scattered in front of the wine-shop, and who had left their posts on Gavroche's arrival, rushed pell-mell toward the barricade; but ere Enjolras's order was executed, the discharge took place with the frightful rattle of a round of grape-shot; it was one, in fact. The shot was aimed at the opening in the redoubt, and ricochetted against the wall, killing two men and wounding three. If this continued the bar-

ricade would be no longer tenable, for the grape-shot entered it. There was a murmur of consternation.

"Let us stop a second round," Enjolras said: and levelling his gun he aimed at the firer, who was leaning over the breech and rectifying the aim. The firer was a handsome young sergeant of artillery, fair, gentle-faced, and having the intelligent look peculiar to that predestined and formidable arm which, owing to its constant improvement, must end by killing war. Combeferre, who was standing by Enjolras' side, gazed at this young man.

"What a pity," said Combeferre, "what a hideous thing such butchery is! Well, when there are no kings left there will be no war. Enjolras, you aim at that sergeant, but do not notice him. Just reflect that he is a handsome young man; he is intrepid. You can see that he is a thinker, and these young artillerymen are well educated; he has a father, mother, and family; he is probably in love, he is but twenty-five years of age at the most, and might be your brother."

"He is so," said Enjolras.

"Yes," Combeferre added, "and mine too. Do not kill him."

"Let me at peace. It must be."

And a tear slowly coursed down Enjolras's marble cheek. At the same time he pulled the trigger and the fire flashed forth. The artilleryman turned twice on his heel, with his arms stretched out before him, and his head raised as if to breathe the air, and then fell across the cannon motionless. His back could be seen, from the middle of which a jet of blood gushed forth; the bullet had gone right through his chest, and he was dead. It was necessary to bear him away and fill up his place, and thus a few minutes were gained. Opinions varied in the barricade, for the firing of the piece was going to begin again, and the barricade could not hold out for a quarter of an hour under the grape-shot; it was absolutely necessary to deaden the rounds. Enjolras gave the command.

"We must have a mattress, then."

"We have none," said Combeferre, "the wounded are lying on them."

Jean Valjean, seated apart on a bench, near the corner of the wine-shop, with his gun between his legs, had not up to the present taken any part in what was going on. He did not seem to hear the combatants saying around him, "There is a gun that does nothing." On hearing the order given by Enjolras, he rose. It will be remembered that on the arrival of the insurgents in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, an old woman, in her

terror of the bullets, placed her mattress in front of her window. This window, a garret window, was on the roof of a six-storeyed house, a little beyond the barricade. The mattress, placed across it, leaning at the bottom upon two clothes-props, was held above by two ropes, which, at a distance, seemed two pieces of pack-thread, and were fastened to nails driven into the mantel-piece. These cords could be distinctly seen on the sky, like hairs.

"Can any one lend me a double-barrelled gun?" Jean Valjean asked.

Enjolras, who had just re-loaded his, handed it to him. Jean Valjean aimed at the garret-window and fired; one of the two cords of the mattress was cut asunder, and it only hung by one thread. Jean Valjean fired the second shot, and the second cord lashed the garret-window; the mattress glided between the two poles and fell into the street. The insurgents applauded, and every voice cried,—

"There is a mattress."

"Yes," said Combeferre, "but who will go and fetch it?"

The mattress, in truth, had fallen outside the barricade, between the besiegers and besieged. Now, as the death of the sergeant of artillery had exasperated the troops, for some time past they had been lying flat behind the pile of paving-stones which they had raised; and in order to make up for the enforced silence of the gun, they had opened fire on the barricade. The insurgents, wishing to save their ammunition, did not return this musketry: the fusillade broke against the barricade, but the street which it filled with bullets was terrible. Jean Valjean stepped out of the gap, entered the street, traversed the hail of bullets, went to the mattress, picked it up, placed it on his back, and re-entering the barricade, himself placed the mattress in the gap, and fixed it against the wall, so that the gunners should not see it. This done, they waited for the next round, which was soon fired. The gun belched forth its canister with a hoarse roar, but there was no ricochet, and the grape-shot was checked by the mattress. The expected result was obtained, and the barricade saved.

"Citizen," Enjolras said to Jean Valjean, "the republic thanks you."

Bossuet admired, and laughingly said,—

"It is immoral for a mattress to have so much power: it is the triumph of what yields over that which thunders. But no matter, glory to the mattress that annuls a cannon!"

CHAPTER XXXVII.

DAWN.

AT this moment Cosette awoke : her bed-room was narrow, clean, discreet, with a long window on the east side looking out into the court-yard of the house. Cosette knew nothing of what was going on in Paris, for she had returned to her bed-room at the time when Toussaint said, "There is a row." Cosette had slept but a few hours, though well. She had had sweet dreams, which resulted perhaps from the fact that her small bed was very white. Somebody, who was Marius, appeared to her in light ; and she rose with the sun in her eyes, which at first produced the effect of a continuation of her dream upon her. Her first thought on coming out of the dream was of a smiling nature, and she felt quite reassured. Like Jean Valjean a few hours before, she was passing through that reaction of the soul which absolutely desires no misfortune. She began hoping with all her strength, without knowing why, and then suffered from a contraction of the heart. She had not seen Marius for three days, but she said to herself that he must have received her letter, that he knew where she was, and that he was so clever, and would find means to get to her,—and most certainly to-day, and perhaps that very morning. It was bright day, but the sunbeam was nearly horizontal, and so she thought that it must be early, but that she ought to rise in order to receive Marius. She felt that she could not live without Marius, and that consequently was sufficient, and Marius would come. No objection was admissible, all this was certain. It was monstrous enough to have suffered for three days: Marius absent for three days, that was horrible on the part of le bon Dieu. Now this cruel suspense sent from on high was a trial passed through ; Marius was about to come and bring good news. Thus is youth constituted : it wipes away its tears quickly, and finding sorrow useless, does not accept it. Youth is the smile of the future of an unknown thing, which is itself: it is natural for it to be happy, and it seems as if its breath were made of hope.

However, Cosette could not succeed in recalling to mind what Marius had said to her on the subject of this absence, which was only to last one day, and what explanation he had given her about it. Every one will have noticed with what skill

a coin let fall on the ground runs to hide itself, and what art it has in rendering itself invisible. There are thoughts which play us the same trick ; they conceal themselves in a corner of our brain : it is all over, they are lost, and it is impossible to recall them to memory. Cosette felt somewhat vexed at the little useless effort her memory made, and said to herself that it was very wrong and culpable of her to forget words pronounced by Marius. She left her bed, and performed the two ablutions of the soul and the body, her prayers and her toilette.

We may, if absolutely required, introduce a reader into a nuptial chamber, but not into a virgin's room. Verse could scarce venture it, but prose durst not do so. It is the interior of a still closed flower, a whiteness in the gloaming, the inner cell of a closed lily, which must not be gazed at by man till it has been gazed at by the sun. Woman in the bud is sacred : this innocent bud, which discovers itself, this adorable semi-nudity which is afraid of itself, this white foot which takes refuge in a slipper, this throat which veils itself before a mirror as if the mirror were an eye, this chemise which hurriedly rises and covers the shoulder at the sound of a piece of furniture creaking or a passing vehicle, these knotted strings, this stay-lace, this tremor, this shudder of cold and shame, this exquisite shyness in every movement, this almost winged anxiety when there is nothing to fear, the successive phases of the apparel, which are as charming as the clouds of dawn—it is not befitting that all this should be described, and it is too much to have merely indicated it. The eye of man must be even more religious before the rising of a maiden than before the rising of a star. The possibility of attaining ought to be turned into augmented respect. The down of the peach, the russet of the plum, crystal radiated with snow, the butterfly's wing powdered with feathers, are but coarse things by the side of this chastity, which does not know itself that it is chaste. The maiden is only the flash of the dream, and is not yet a statue ; her alcove is concealed in the sombre part of the ideal, and the indiscreet touch of the eye brutalizes this vague transparent shadow. In this case contemplation is profanation. We will therefore say nothing about the sweet awaking and rising of Cosette. An eastern fable tells us that the rose was made white by God, but that Adam having looked at it for a moment when it opened, it felt ashamed, and turned pink. We are of those who feel themselves abashed in the presence of maidens and flowers, for we find them venerable.

Cosette dressed herself very rapidly, and combed and dressed her hair, which was very simple at that day, when women did

not swell their ringlets and plaits with cushions and pads, and placed no crinoline in their hair. Then she opened the window and looked all around, hoping to discover somewhere in the street, at the corner of a house, a place whence she could watch for Marius. But nothing could be seen of the outside: the court-yard was surrounded by rather lofty walls, and was bounded by other gardens. Cosette declared these gardens hideous, and for the first time in her life considered flowers ugly. The paltriest street gutter would have suited her purpose better; and she resolved to look up to heaven, as if she thought that Marius might possibly come thence. Suddenly she burst into tears, not through any fickleness of temperament, but her situation consisted of hopes dashed with despondency. She confusedly felt something horrible, and in truth things pass in the air. She said to herself that she was sure of nothing, that letting herself out of sight was losing herself, and the idea that Marius might return to her from heaven appeared to her no longer charming but lugubrious. Then—for such these clouds are—calmness returned, and hope and a species of unconscious smile, which trusted in God, however.

Everybody was still asleep in the house, and a provincial silence prevailed. No shutter was opened, and the porter's lodge was still closed. Toussaint was not up, and Cosette naturally thought that her father was asleep. She must have suffered greatly, and must still be suffering, for she said to herself that her father had been unkind, but she reckoned on Marius. The eclipse of such a light was decidedly impossible. At moments she heard some distance off a sort of heavy shock, and thought how singular it was that gates were opened and shut at so early an hour; it was the sound of the cannon-balls battering the barricade. There was a martin's nest a few feet below Cosette's window in the old smoke-blackened cornice, and the mouth of the nest projected a little beyond the cornice, so that the interior of this little Paradise could be seen from above. The mother was there expanding her wings like a fan over her brood; the male bird fluttered round, went away, and then returned, bringing in his bill food and kisses. The rising day gilded this happy thing, the great law, increase and multiply, was there smiling and august, and the sweet mystery was unfolded in the glory of the morn. Cosette, with her hair in the sunshine, her soul in flames, enlightened by love within and the dawn without, bent forward as if mechanically, and, almost without daring to confess to herself that she was thinking at the same time of Marius, she began looking at these birds, this family, this male and female, this mother and her little ones,

with all the profound trouble which the sight of a nest occasions a virgin.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

PASSING FLASHES.

THE fire of the assailants continued, and the musketry and grape-shot alternated, though without producing much mischief. The upper part of Corinth alone suffered, and the first-floor and garret-windows, pierced by slugs and bullets, gradually lost their shape. The combatants posted there were compelled to withdraw, but, in fact, such are the tactics of an attack on a barricade, to skirmish for a long time and exhaust the ammunition of the insurgents, if they commit the error of returning the fire. When it is discovered by the slackening of their fire that they have no powder or ball left, the assault is made. Enjolras had not fallen into this trap, and the barricade did not reply. At each platoon fire, Gavroche thrust his tongue into his cheek, a sign of supreme disdain.

"That's good," he said, "tear up the linen, for we require lint."

Courfeyrac addressed the grape-shot on its want of effect, and said to the cannon,—

"You are becoming diffuse, my good fellow."

In battle intrigues take place as at a ball; and it is probable that the silence of the redoubt was beginning to render the assailants anxious, and make them fear lest some unexpected incident had occurred. They felt a need of seeing clearly through this pile of paving-stones, and what was going on behind this impassive wall, which received shots without answering them. The insurgents suddenly perceived a helmet glistening in the sun upon an adjoining roof: a sapper was leaning against a tall chimney-pot and apparently a sentry there. He looked down into the barricade.

"That's a troublesome spy," said Enjolras.

Jean had returned Enjolras his fowling-piece, but still had his own musket. Without saying a word he aimed at the sapper, and a second later the helmet, struck by a bullet, fell noisily into the street. The soldier disappeared with all possible haste. A second watchman took his place, and it was an officer. Jean Valjean, who had reloaded his musket, aimed at the new-comer, and sent the officer's helmet to join the private's. The officer

was not obstinate, but withdrew very quickly. This time the hint was understood, and no one again appeared on the roof.

"Why did you not kill the man?" Bossuet asked Jean Valjean, who, however, made no reply.

Bossuet muttered in Combeferre's ear,—

"He has not answered my question."

"He is a man who does kind actions with musket-shots," said Combeferre.

Those who have any recollection of this now distant epoch know that the suburban National Guards were valiant against the insurrection, and they were peculiarly brave and obstinate in the days of June, 1832. Any worthy landlord, whose establishment the insurrection injured, became leonine on seeing his dancing-room deserted, and let himself be killed in order to save orders as represented by the book. At this time, which was at once heroic and bourgeois, in the presence of ideas which had their knights, interests had their Paladins, and the prosaicism of the motive took away none of the bravery of the movement. The decrease of a pile of crowns made bankers sing the Marseillaise, men lyrically shed their blood for the till, and defended with Lacedæmonian enthusiasm the shop, that immense diminutive of the country. Altogether there was a good deal that was very serious in all this; social interests were entering into a contest, while awaiting the day when they would enter a state of equilibrium. Another sign of this time was the anarchy mingled with the governmentalism (a barbarous term of the *juste-milieu* party), and men were for order without discipline. The drums played unexpectedly fancy calls, at the command of some colonel of the National Guard: one captain went under fire through inspiration, while some National Guards fought "for the idea," and on their own account. In moments of a crisis on "days" men followed the advice of their chiefs less than their own instincts, and there were in the army of order real Guerilleros, some of the sword like Fannicot, and others of the pen like Henry Fonfrède. Civilization, unhappily represented at this period more by an aggregation of interests than by a group of principles, was, or believed itself to be, in danger; it uttered the alarm cry, and every man, constituting himself a centre, defended, succoured, and protected it, in his own way, and the first comer took on himself to save society.

Zeal sometimes went as far as extermination; a platoon of National Guards constituted themselves of their own authority a council of war, and tried and executed in five minutes an insurgent prisoner. It was an improvisation of this nature which killed Jean Prouvaire. It is that ferocious Lynch law

with which no party has the right to reproach another, for it is applied by the republic in America as by monarchy in Europe. This Lynch law was complicated by mistakes ; on a day of riot a young poet of the name of Paul Aimé Garnier was pursued on the Place Royale at the bayonet's point, and only escaped by taking shelter under the gate-way at No. 6. "There's another of those *St Simonians*," they shouted, and wished to kill him. Now, he had under his arm a volume of the Memoirs of the Duc de St Simon ; a National Guard read on the back the words *Saint Simon*, and shouted, "Death to him !" On June 6, 1832, a company of suburban National Guards, commanded by Captain Fannicot, to whom we have already referred, decimated the Rue de la Chanvrerie for his own good pleasure, and on his own authority. This fact, singular though it is, was proved by the judicial report drawn up in consequence of the insurrection of 1832. Captain Fannicot, an impatient and bold bourgeois, a species of condottiere of order, and a fanatical and insubmissive governmentalist, could not resist the attraction of firing prematurely, and taking the barricade all by himself, that is to say, with his company. Exasperated at the successive apparition of the red flag and the old coat, which he took for the black flag, he loudly blamed the generals and commanders of corps, who were holding councils, as they did not think the decisive moment for assault had arrived, but were "letting the insurrection stew in its own gravy," according to a celebrated expression of one of them. As for him, he thought the barricade ripe, and as everything that is ripe is bound to fall he made the attempt.

He commanded men as resolute as himself. "Madmen," a witness called them. His company, the same which had shot Jean Prouvaire, was the first of the battalion posted at the street corner. At the moment when it was least expected the captain dashed his men at the barricade, but this movement, executed with more good-will than strategy, cost Fannicot's company dearly. Before it had covered two-thirds of the street a general discharge from the barricade greeted it ; four, the boldest men of all, running at the head, were shot down in point blank range at the very foot of the barricade, and this courageous mob of National Guards, very brave men, but not possessing the military tenacity, was compelled to fall back after a few moments, leaving fifteen corpses in the street. The momentary hesitation gave the insurgents time to reload, and a second and most deadly discharge assailed the company before the men were able to regain their shelter at the corner of the street. In a moment they were caught between two fires, and received

the volley from the cannon, which, having no orders to the contrary, did not cease firing. The intrepid and imprudent Fannicot was one of those killed by this round of grape-shot: he was laid low by the cannon. This attack, which was more furious than serious, irritated Enjolras.

"The asses!" he said, "they have their men killed and expend our ammunition for nothing."

Enjolras spoke like the true general of the riot that he was: insurrection and repression do not fight with equal arms; for the insurrection, which can be soon exhausted, has only a certain number of rounds to fire and of combatants to expend. An expended cartouche-box and a killed man cannot have their place filled up. Repression, on the other hand, having the army, does not count men, and bare Vincennes does not count rounds. Repression has as many regiments as the barricade has men, and as many arsenals as the barricade has cartouche-boxes. Hence these are always contests of one man against a hundred, which ever end by the destruction of the barricade, unless revolution, suddenly dashing up, casts into the balance its flashing archangel's glaive. Such things happen, and then everything rises, paving-stones get into a state of ebullition and popular redoubts swarm. Paris has a sovereign tremor, the *quid divinum* is evolved; there is an August 10 or a July 29 in the air, a prodigious light appears, the yawning throat of force recoils, and the army, that lion, sees that prophet, France, standing erect and tranquil before it. In the chaos of feelings and passions which defend a barricade there is everything; bravery, youth, the point of honour, enthusiasm, the ideal, conviction, the obstinacy of the gambler, and above all intermitting gleams of hope. One of these intermittences, one of these vague quiverings of hope, suddenly ran along the Chaverrerie barricade at the most unexpected moment.

"Listen," Enjolras, who was ever on the watch, exclaimed, "I fancy that Paris is waking up."

It is certain that on the morning of June 6 the insurrection had for an hour or two a certain reanimation. The obstinacy of the tocsin of St Merry aroused a few inclinations, and barricades were begun in the Rue de Poirier and in the Rue du Grauilliers. In front of the Porte St Martin, a young man armed with a gun attacked a squadron of cavalry alone, unprotected, and on the open boulevard he knelt down, raised his gun, fired and killed the Major, and then turned away, saying, *There's another who will do us no more mischief.* He was cut down. In the Rue St Denis a woman fired at the National Guard from behind a Venetian shutter, and the wooden laths

could be seen to tremble every moment. A boy of fourteen was arrested in the Rue de la Cossonnerie with his pockets full of cartridges, and several Guard-houses were attacked. At the entrance of the Rue Bertin Poirée a very sharp and quite unexpected fusillade greeted a regiment of Cuirassiers, at the head of which rode General Cavaignac de Baragne. In the Rue Planche Mibray, old crockery and household utensils were thrown from the roofs down on the troops; this was a bad sign, and when Marshal Soult was informed of the fact, Napoleon's old lieutenant became pensive, for he remembered Suchet's remark at Saragossa: *We are lost when old women empty their pots de chambre on our heads.* These general symptoms manifested at a moment when the riots were supposed to be localized, this fever of anger which regained the upper hand, these Will-o'-the-wisps flying here and there, over the profound masses of combustible matter which are called the faubourgs of Paris, and all the accompanying facts, rendered the chiefs anxious, and they hastened to extinguish the first outbreak of the fire. Until these sparks were quenched the attacks on the barricades Mantuée, de la Chanvrerie, and St Merry were deferred, so that all might be finished at one blow. Columns of troops were sent through the streets in a state of fermentation, sweeping the large streets and sounding the smaller ones, on the right and on the left, at one moment slowly and cautiously, at another at the double. The troops broke open the doors of the houses whence firing was heard, and at the same time cavalry manœuvres dispersed the groups on the boulevards. This repression was not effected without turmoil, and that tumultuous noise peculiar to collisions between the army and the people, and it was this that had attracted Enjolras's attention in the intervals between the cannonading and the platoon fire. Moreover, he had seen wounded men carried along the end of the street on litters, and said to Courfeyrac, "Those wounded are not our handiwork."

The hope lasted but a short time, and the gleam was quickly eclipsed. In less than half an hour what there was in the air vanished, it was like a flash of lightning without thunder, and the insurgents felt that leaden pall, which the indifference of the people casts upon abandoned obstinate men, fall upon them again. The general movement, which seemed to have been obscurely designed, failed, and the attention of the Minister of War and the strategy of the generals could now be concentrated on the three or four barricades that remained standing. The sun rose on the horizon, and an insurgent addressed Enjolras,—

"We are hungry here. Are we really going to die like this, without eating?"

Enjolras, still leaning at his parapet, made a nod of affirmation, without taking his eyes off the end of the street.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

GAVROCHE OUTSIDE.

COURFEYRAC, seated on a stone by the side of Enjolras, continued to insult the cannon, and each time that the gloomy shower of projectiles which is called a grape-shot passed with its monstrous noise he greeted it with an ironical remark.

"You are wasting your breath, my poor old brute, and I feel sorry for you, as your row is thrown away. That is not thunder, but a cough."

And those around him laughed. Courfeyrac and Bossuet, whose valiant good-humour increased with danger, made up for the want of food, like Madame Scarron, by jests, and as wine was short, poured out gaiety for all.

"I admire Enjolras," Bossuet said, "and his temerity astonishes me. He lives alone, which, perhaps, renders him a little sad; and Enjolras is to be pitied for his greatness, which attaches him to widowhood. We fellows have all, more or less, mistresses, who make us mad, that is to say brave, and when a man is as full of love as a tiger the least he can do is to fight like a lion. That is a way of avenging ourselves for the tricks which our grisettes play us. Roland lets himself be killed to vex Angelique, and all our heroism comes from our women. A man without a woman is like a pistol without a hammer, and it is the woman who makes the man go off. Well, Enjolras has no woman, he is not in love, and finds means to be intrepid. It is extraordinary that a man can be cold as ice and daring as fire."

Enjolras did not appear to listen; but any one who had been near him might have heard him murmur, in a low voice, *Patria*. Bossuet laughed again, when Courfeyrac shouted,—

"Here's something fresh."

And assuming the voice of a groom of the chambers who announces a visitor, he added,—

"Mr Eight-Pounder."

In fact, a new character had come on the stage; it was a second piece of artillery. The gunners rapidly got it into position by the side of the first one, and this was the beginning of the end. A few minutes later both guns, being actively served, were at work against the barricade, and the platoon fire of the line and the suburban National Guards supported the artillery. Another cannonade was audible some distance off. At the same time as the two guns were furiously assaulting the redoubt in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, two other pieces placed in position, one in the Rue St Denis, the other in the Rue Aubrey-le-Boucher, were pounding the St Merry barricade. The four guns formed a lugubrious echo to each other, and the barks of the grim dogs of war responded to each other. Of the two guns now opened on the barricade of the Rue de la Chanvrerie, one fired shell, the other solid shot. The gun which fired the latter was pointed at a slight elevation, and the firing was so calculated that the ball struck the extreme edge of the crest of the barricades, and hurled the broken paving-stones on the heads of the insurgents. This mode of fire was intended to drive the combatants from the top of the redoubt, and compel them to close up in the interior; that is to say, it announced the assault. Once the combatants were driven from the top of the barricade by the cannon and from the windows of the public-house by the canister, the columns of attack could venture into the street without being aimed at, perhaps without even being seen, suddenly escalade the barricade, as on the previous evening, and take it by surprise.

"The annoyance of these guns must be reduced," said Enjolras, and he shouted, "Fire at the artillerymen."

All were ready,—the barricade, which had so long been silent, was belted with flame; seven or eight rounds succeeded each other with a sort of rage and joy; the street was filled with a blinding smoke, and at the expiration of a few minutes there might be confusedly seen through the mist, all striped with flame, two-thirds of the artillerymen lying under the gun-wheels. Those who remained standing continued to serve the guns with a stern tranquillity, but the fire was reduced.

"Things are going well," said Bossuet to Enjolras, "that is a success."

Enjolras shook his head, and replied,—

"Another quarter of an hour of that success, and there will not be a dozen cartridges left in the barricade."

It appears that Gavroche heard the remark, for Courfeyrac

all at once perceived somebody in the street, at the foot of the barricade, amid the shower of bullets. Gavroche had fetched a hamper from the pot-house, passed through the gap, and was quickly engaged in emptying into it the full cartouche-boxes of the National Guards killed on the slope of the barricade.

"What are you doing there?" Courfeyrac said.
Gavroche looked up.

"Citizen, I am filling my hamper."

"Do you not see the grape-shot?"

Gavroche replied,—

"Well, it is raining, what then?"

Courfeyrac cried, "Come in."

"Directly," said Gavroche.

And with one bound he reached the street. It will be borne in mind that Fannicot's company, in retiring, left behind it a number of corpses; some twenty dead lay here and there all along the pavement of the street. That made twenty cartouche-boxes for Gavroche, and a stock of cartridges for the barricade. The smoke lay in the street like a fog; any one who has seen a cloud in a mountain gorge, between two precipitous escarpments, can form an idea of this smoke, contracted, and as it were rendered denser, by the two dark lines of tall houses. It rose slowly, and was incessantly renewed; whence came a gradual obscurity, which dulled even the bright daylight. The combatants could scarce see each other from either end of the street, which was, however, very short. This darkness, probably desired and calculated on by the chiefs who were about to direct the assault on the barricade, was useful for Gavroche. Under the cloak of this smoke, and thanks to his shortness, he was enabled to advance a considerable distance along the street unnoticed, and he plundered the first seven or eight cartouche-boxes without any great danger. He crawled on his stomach, galloped on all fours, took his hamper in his teeth, writhed, glided, undulated, wound from one corpse to another, and emptied the cartouche-box as a monkey opens a nut. They did not cry to him from the barricade, to which he was still rather close, to return, for fear of attracting attention to him. On one corpse, which was a corporal's, he found a powder-flask.

"For thirst," he said, as he put it in his pocket.

While moving forward he at length reached the point where the fog of the fire became transparent, so that the sharp-shooters of the line drawn up behind their parapet of paving-stones, and the National Guard at the corner of the street, all at once pointed out to each other something stirring in the street. At

the moment when Gavroche was taking the cartridges from a sergeant lying near a post a bullet struck the corpse.

"Oh! for shame," said Gavroche, "they are killing my dead for me."

A second bullet caused the stones to strike fire close to him, while a third upset his hamper. Gavroche looked and saw that it came from the National Guards. He stood upright, with his hair floating in the breeze, his hand on his hips, and his eyes fixed on the National Guards who were firing, and he sang,—

On est laid à Nanterre,
C'est la faute à Voltaire,
Et bête à Palaiseau,
C'est la faute à Rousseau.

Then he picked up his hamper, put into it the cartridges scattered around without missing one, and walked toward the firing party, to despoil another cartouche-box. Then a fourth bullet missed him. Gavroche sang,—

Je ne suis pas notaire,
C'est la faute à Voltaire,
Je suis petit oiseau,
C'est la faute à Rousseau.

A fifth bullet only succeeded so far as to draw a third couplet from him,—

Joie est mon caractère,
C'est la faute à Voltaire :
Misère est mon trousseau,
C'est la faute à Rousseau.

They went on for some time longer, and the sight was at once terrific and charming; Gavroche, while fired at, ridiculed the firing, and appeared to be greatly amused. He was like a sparrow deriding the sportsmen, and answered each discharge by a couplet. The troops aimed at him incessantly, and constantly missed him, and the National Guards and the soldiers laughed, while covering him. He lay down, then rose again, hid himself in a doorway, then bounded, disappeared, reappeared, ran off, came back, replied to the grape-shot by taking a sight, and all the while plundered cartridges, emptied boxes, and filled his hamper. The insurgents watched him, as they panted with anxiety, but while the barricade trembled he sang. He was not a child, he was not a man, he was a strange goblin gamin, and he resembled the invulnerable dwarf of the combat. The bullets ran after him, but he was more active than they; he played a frightful game of hide and seek with death: and each time that the snub-nosed face

of the spectre approached the gamin gave it a fillip. One bullet, however, better aimed or more treacherous than the rest, at length struck the Will-o'-the-wisp lad ; Gavroche was seen to totter and then sink. The whole barricade uttered a cry, but there was an Antæus in this pigmy : for a gamin to touch the pavement is like the giant touching the earth ; and Gavroche had only fallen to rise again. He remained in a sitting posture, a long jet of blood ran down his face, he raised both arms in the air, looked in the direction whence the shot had come, and began singing,—

Je suis tombé par terre,
C'est la faute à Voltaire :
Le nez dans le ruisseau,
C'est la faute à —

He did not finish, for a second shot from the same marksman stopped him short. This time he lay with his face on the pavement, and did not stir again. This little great soul had fled away.

CHAPTER XL.

HOW A BROTHER BECOMES A FATHER.

THERE were at this very moment in the Luxembourg garden—for the eye of the drama must be everywhere present—two lads holding each other's hand. One might be seven, the other five, years of age. As they were wet through with the rain they walked along sunshiny paths ; the elder led the younger, both were in rags and pale, and they looked like wild birds. The younger said, “I am very hungry.” The elder, who had already a protecting air, led his brother with the left hand, and had a switch in his right. They were alone in the garden, which was deserted, as the gates were closed by police order on account of the insurrection. The troops who had bivouacked there had issued forth for the exigences of the combat. How were these children here ? Perhaps they had escaped from some guard-room where the door was left ajar ; perhaps in the vicinity, at the Barrière d'Enfer, on the esplanade of the Observatory, or in the neighbouring square overshadowed by the cornice, on which may be read, *invenerunt parvulum pannis involutum*, there was some mountebank's booth from which they had

fled ; perhaps they had on the previous evening kept out of sight of the rangers at the Luxembourg, and had spent the night in one of those summer-houses in which people read the papers : the fact is, that they were wandering about, and seemed to be free. To be a wanderer, and to appear free, is to be lost, and these poor little creatures were really lost. The two lads were the same about whom Gavroche had been in trouble, and whom the reader will remember, sons of Thénardier, let out to Magnon, attributed to M. Gillenormand, and now leaves fallen from all these rootless branches, and rolled along the ground by the wind.

Their clothes, clean in the time of Magnon, and which served her as a prospectus to M. Gillenormand, had become rags ; and these beings henceforth belonged to the statistics of "deserted children," whom the police pick up, lose, and find again on the pavement of Paris. It needed the confusion of such a day as this for these two poor little wretches to be in this garden. If the rangers had noticed these rags they would have expelled them, for poor little lads do not enter public gardens, and yet it ought to be remembered that as children they have a right to flowers. They were here, thanks to the locked gates, and were committing an offence ; they had stepped into the garden and remained there. Though locked gates do not give a holiday to the keepers, and their surveillance is supposed to continue, it grows weaker and rests ; and the keepers, also affected by the public affairs, and more busied about the outside than the inside, did not look at the garden, and had not seen the two delinquents. It had rained on the previous evening, and even slightly on this morning, but in June showers are of no great consequence. People hardly perceive, an hour after a storm, that this fair beauteous day has wept, for the earth dries up as rapidly as a child's cheek. At this moment of the solstice the midday light is, so to speak, poignant, and it seizes everything. It clings to and spreads itself over the earth with a sort of suction, and we might say that the sun is thirsty. A shower is a glass of water, and rain is at once drunk up. In the morning everything glistens, in the afternoon everything is dusty. Nothing is so admirable as verdure cleansed by the rain and dried by the sun ; it is warm freshness. Gardens and fields, having water in their roots and sunshine in their flowers, become censers of incense, and smoke with all their perfumes at once. Everything laughs, sings, and offers itself, and we feel softly intoxicated ; summer is a temporary Paradise, and the sun helps man to be patient.

There are beings who ask no more, living creatures who,

having the azure of heaven, say, it is enough, dreamers absorbed in the prodigy, drawing from the idolatry of nature indifference to good and evil, contemplators of the Cosmos, radiantly distracted from man, who do not understand how people can trouble themselves about the hunger of one person, the thirst of another, the nudity of the poor man in winter, the lymphatic curvature of a small back-bone, the truck bed, the garret, the cell, and the rags of young shivering girls, when they can dream under the trees : they are peaceful and terrible minds, pitilessly satisfied, and, strange to say, infinitude suffices them. They ignore that great want of man, the finite which admits of an embrace, and do not dream of the finite which admits of progress, that sublime toil. The indefinite, which springs from the divine and human combination of the infinite and the finite, escapes them, and provided that they can be face to face with immensity, they smile. They never feel joy, but always ecstasy, and their life is one of abstraction. The history of humanity is to them but a grand detail : the All is not in it, the All remains outside of it. Of what use is it to trouble oneself about that item, man ? Man suffers, it is possible, but just look at Aldebaran rising ! The mother has no milk left, the new-born babe is dying. I know nothing of all that, but just look at the marvellous rose made by a sprig of hawthorn when looked at through a microscope, just compare the finest Mechlin lace with that. These thinkers forget to love, and the zodiac has such an attraction over them that it prevents them seeing the weeping child. God eclipses their soul, and they are a family of minds at once great and little. Homer belonged to it, so did Goethe, and possibly Lafontaine, magnificent egotists of the infinite, calm spectators of sorrow, who do not see Nero if the weather be fine ; from whom the sun hides the pyre ; who would look at a guillotining to seek a light effect in it ; who hear neither cries nor sobs, nor the death-rattle nor the tocsin, for whom everything is good, since there is the month of May ; who so long as they have clouds of purple and gold above their heads declare themselves satisfied, and who are determined to be happy until the radiance of the stars and the song of birds are exhausted.

These are dark radiances, and they do not suspect that they are to be pitied. But they are certainly so, for the man who does not weep does not see. We must admire and pity them, as we would pity and admire a being at once night and day, who had no eyes under his brows, but a star in the centre of his forehead. The indifference of these thinkers is, according to some, a grand philosophy. Be it so, but in this superiority there is infirmity. A man may be immortal and limp, as wit-

ness Vulcan, and he may be more than man and less than man; there is immense incompleteness in nature, and who knows whether the sun be not blind? but in that case, whom to trust? *Solem quis dicere falsum audeat?* Hence, certain geniuses, certain human deities, star-men, might be mistaken? what is above at the summit, at the zenith, which pours so much light on the earth, might see little, see badly, not see at all? is not that desperate? no: but what is there above the sun? God.

On June 6, 1832, at about eleven in the forenoon, the Luxembourg, solitary and depopulated, was delicious. The quincunxes and flower-beds sent balm and dazzlement into the light, and the branches, wild in the brilliancy of midday, seemed trying to embrace each other. There was in the sycamores a twittering of linnets, the sparrows were triumphal, and the woodpeckers crept along the chestnut, gently tapping the holes in the bark. The beds accepted the legitimate royalty of the lilies, for the most august of perfumes is that which issues from whiteness. The sharp odour of the carnations was inhaled, and the old rooks of Marie de Medicis made love on the lofty trees. The sun gilded, purpled, and illumined the tulips, which are nothing but all the varieties of flame made into flowers. All around the tulip-beds hummed the bees, the flashes of these fire-flowers. All was grace and gaiety, even the coming shower, for that relapse, by which the lilies and honeysuckles would profit, had nothing alarming about it, and the swallows made the delicious menace of flying low. What was there aspired happiness: life smelt pleasantly, and all this nature exhaled candour, help, assistance, paternity, caresses, and dawn. The thoughts that fell from heaven were as soft as a little child's hand we kiss. The statues under the trees, nude and white, were robed in dresses of shadow shot with light; these goddesses were all ragged with sunshine, and beams hung from them on all sides. Around the great basin the earth was already so dry as to be parched, and there was a breeze sufficiently strong to create here and there small riots of dust. A few yellow leaves remaining from the last autumn joyously pursued each other, and seemed to be sporting.

The abundance of light had something strangely reassuring about it; life, sap, heat, and exhalations overflowed, and the enormity of the source could be felt beneath creation. In all these blasts penetrated with love, in this movement of reflections and gleams, in this prodigious expenditure of beams, and in this indefinite outpouring of fluid gold, the prodigality of the inexhaustible could be felt, and behind this splendour, as behind a

curtain of flames, glimpses of God, that millionaire of the stars, could be caught. Thanks to the sand, there was not a speck of mud, and, thanks to the rain, there was not a grain of ash. The bouquets had just performed their ablutions, and all the velvets, all the satins, all the varnish, and all the gold which issue from the earth in the shape of flowers, were irreproachable. This magnificence was cleanly, and the grand silence of happy nature filled the garden. A heavenly silence, compatible with a thousand strains of music, the fondling tones from the nests, the buzzing of the swarms, and the palpitations of the wind. The whole harmony of the season was blended into a graceful whole, the entrances and exits of spring took place in the desired order, the lilacs were finishing, and the jessamine beginning, a few flowers were retarded, a few insects before their time, and the vanguard of the red butterflies of June fraternized with the rearguard of the white butterflies of May. The plane trees were putting on a fresh skin, and the breeze formed undulations in the magnificent enormity of the chestnut-trees. It was splendid. A veteran from the adjoining barracks who was looking through the railings said, "Nature is wearing her full-dress uniform."

All nature was breakfasting, and creation was at table ; it was the hour : the great blue cloth was laid in heaven, and the great green one on earth, while the sun gave an *à giorno* illumination. God was serving his universal meal, and each being had its pasture or its pasty. The wood-pigeon found hemp-seed, the greenfinch found millet, the goldfinch found chickweed, the redbreast found worms, the bee found flowers, the fly found infusoria, and the bird found flies. They certainly devoured each other to some extent, which is the mystery of evil mingled with good, but not a single animal had an empty stomach. The two poor abandoned boys had got near the great basin, and somewhat confused by all this light, tried to hide themselves, which is the instinct of the poor and the weak in the presence of magnificence, even when it is impersonal, and they kept behind the swan's house. Now and then, at intervals when the wind blew, confused shouts, a rumour, a sort of noisy death-rattle which was musketry, and dull blows which were cannon-shots, could be heard. There was smoke above the roofs in the direction of the Halles, and a bell which seemed to be summoning sounded in the distance. The children did not seem to notice the noises, and the younger lad repeated every now and then in a low voice, "I am hungry."

Almost simultaneously with the two boys another couple approached the basin, consisting of a man of about fifty, leading

by the hand a boy of six years of age. It was doubtless a father with his son. The younger of the two had a cake in his hand. At this period certain contiguous houses in the Rue Madame and the Rue d'Enfer had keys to the Luxembourg, by which the lodgers could let themselves in when the gates were locked, but this permission has since been withdrawn. This father and son evidently came from one of these houses. The two poor little creatures saw "this gentleman" coming, and hid themselves a little more. He was a citizen, and perhaps the same whom Marius through his love-fever had one day heard near the same great basin counselling his son "to avoid excesses." He had an affable and haughty look, and a mouth which, as it did not close, always smiled. This mechanical smile, produced by too much jaw and too little skin, shows the teeth rather than the soul. The boy with the bitten cake he had and did not finish, seemed uncomfortably full; the boy was dressed in a National Guard's uniform, on account of the riots, and the father remained in civilian garb for the sake of prudence. Father and son had halted near the great basin, in which the two swans were disporting. This cit appeared to have a special admiration for the swans, and resembled them in the sense that he walked like them. At this moment the swans were swimming, which is their principal talent, and were superb. Had the two little fellows listened, and been of an age to comprehend, they might have overheard the remarks of a serious man ; the father was saying to his son,—

"The sage lives contented with little ; look at me, my son, I do not care for luxury. You never see me in a coat glistening with gold and precious stones ; I leave that false lustre to badly-organized minds."

Here the deep shouts which came from the direction of the Halles broke out, with a redoubling of bells and noise.

"What is that ?" the lad asked.

The father replied,—

"That is the saturnalia."

All at once he perceived the two little ragged boys standing motionless behind the swan's green house.

"Here is the beginning," he said.

And after a silence he added,—

"Anarchy enters this garden."

In the mean while the boy bit the cake, spat it out again, and suddenly began crying.

"Why are you crying ?" the father asked.

"I am no longer hungry," said the boy.

The father's smile became more marked than ever.

"You need not be hungry to eat a cake."

"I am tired of cake. It is so filling."

"Dont you want any more?"

"No."

The father showed him the swans.

"Throw it to those palmipedes."

The boy hesitated, for if he did not want any more cake that was no reason to give it away.

The father continued,—

"Be humane: you ought to have pity on animals."

And, taking the cake from his son, he threw it into the basin, when it fell rather near the bank. The swans were some distance off, near the centre of the basin, and engaged with some prey: they had seen neither the citizen nor the cake. The citizen, feeling that the cake ran a risk of being lost, and affected by this useless shipwreck, began a telegraphic agitation, which eventually attracted the attention of the swans. They noticed something floating on the surface, tacked, like the vessels they are, and came towards the cake slowly, with the majesty that befits white beasts.

"Swans understand signs," the bourgeois, pleased at his own cleverness, said.

At this moment the distant tumult of the city was suddenly swollen. This time it was sinister, and there are some puffs of wind which speak more distinctly than others. The one which blew at this moment distinctly brought up the rolling of drums, shouts, platoon fires, and the mournful replies of the tocsin, and the cannon. This coincided with a black cloud, which suddenly veiled the sky. The swans had not yet reached the cake.

"Let us go home," the father said, "they are attacking the Tuileries."

He seized his son's hand again, and then continued,—

"From the Tuileries to the Luxembourg there is only the distance which separates the royalty from the peerage; and that is not far. It is going to rain musketry."

He looked at the cloud,—

"And perhaps, we shall have rain of the other sort too; heaven is interfering: the younger branch is condemned. Let us make haste home."

"I should like to see the swans eat the cake," said the boy.

"It would be imprudent," the father answered; and he led away his little bourgeois. The son, regretting the swans, turned his head toward the basin, until an elbow of the quincunxes concealed it from him. The two little vagabonds had in the mean while approached the cake simultaneously with the

swans. It was floating on the water; the smaller boy looked at the cake; the other looked at the citizen, who was going off. Father and son entered the labyrinth of trees that runs to the grand staircase of the clump of trees in the direction of the Rue Madame. When they were no longer in sight, the elder hurriedly lay down full length on the rounded bank of the basin, and holding by his left hand, while bending over the water, till he all but fell in, he stretched out his switch toward the cake with the other. The swans, seeing the enemy, hastened up, and in hastening made a chest-effort, useful to the little fisher; the water flowed back in front of the swans, and one of the gentle, concentric undulations gently impelled the cake toward the boy's switch. When the swans got up the stick was touching the cake; the lad gave a quick blow, startled the swans, seized the cake, and got up. The cake was soaking, but they were hungry and thirsty. The elder boy divided the cake into two parts, a large one and a small one, kept the small one for himself, and gave the larger piece to his brother, saying,—

“*Shove that into your gun.*”

CHAPTER XLI.

JEAN VALJEAN'S REVENGE.

MARIUS rushed out of the barricade, and Combeferre followed him; but it was too late, and Gavroche was dead. Combeferre brought in the hamper of cartridges, and Marius the boy. Alas! he thought he was requiting the son for what the father had done for his father; but Thénardier had brought in his father alive, while he brought in the lad dead. When Marius re-entered the barricade with Gavroche in his arms his face was inundated with blood, like the boy's; for, at the very instant when he stooped to pick up Gavroche, a bullet had grazed his skull, but he had not noticed it. Courfeyrac took off his neckcloth and bound Marius' forehead; Gavroche was deposited on the same table with Mabœuf, and the black shawl was spread over both bodies; it was large enough for the old man and the child. Combeferre distributed the cartridges which he had brought in, and they gave each man fifteen rounds to fire. Jean Valjean was still at the same spot, mo-

tionless on his bench. When Combeferre offered him his fifteen cartridges he shook his head.

"That is a strange eccentric," Combeferre said in a whisper to Enjolras. "He manages not to fight inside this barricade."

"Which does not prevent him from defending it," Enjolras answered.

"Heroism has its original characters," Combeferre resumed.

And Courfeyrac, who overheard him, said,—

"He is a different sort from Father Mabœuf."

It is a thing worth mentioning, that the fire hurtled at the barricade scarce disturbed the interior. Those who have never passed the tornado of a warfare of this nature cannot form any idea of the singular moments of calmness mingled with these convulsions. Men come and go, they talk, they jest, they idle. A friend of ours heard a combatant say to him, in the midst of the grape-shot, *It is like being at a bachelor's breakfast here.* The redoubt in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, we repeat, appeared internally most calm; and all the incidents and phases were, or would shortly be, exhausted. The position had become from critical menacing, and from menacing was probably about to become desperate. In proportion as the situation grew darker an heroic gleam more and more purpled the barricade. Enjolras commanded it in the attitude of a young Spartan, devoting his bare sword to the gloomy genius, Epidotas. Combeferre, with an apron tied round him, was dressing the wounded. Bossuet and Feuilly were making cartridges with the powder-flask found by Gavroche on the dead corporal, and Bossuet was saying to Feuilly, *We are soon going to take the diligence for another planet.* Courfeyrac, seated on the few paving-stones which he had set aside near Enjolras, was preparing and arranging an entire arsenal; his sword-cane, his gun, two holster-pistols, and a club, with the ease of a girl setting a small Dunkerque in order. Jean Valjean was silently looking at the wall facing him, and a workman was fastening on his head, with a piece of string, a broad-brimmed straw bonnet of Mother Hucheloup's, *for fear of sun-strokes*, as he said. The young men of the Aix Cogourde were gaily chatting together, as if desirous to talk patois for the last time. Joly, who had taken down Widow Hucheloup's mirror, was examining his tongue in it; while a few combatants, who had discovered some nearly mouldering crusts of bread in a drawer, were eating them greedily. Marius was anxious about what his father would say to him.

We must lay a stress upon a psychological fact peculiar

to barricades, for nothing which characterizes this surprising war of streets ought to be omitted. Whatever the internal tranquillity to which we have just referred may be, the barricade does not the less remain a vision for those who are inside it. There is an apocalypse in a civil war, all the darkness of the unknown world is mingled with these stern flashes, revolutions are sphynxes, and any one who has stood behind a barricade believes that he has gone through a dream. What is felt at these spots, as we have shown in the matter of Marius, and whose consequences we shall see, is more and less than life. On leaving a barricade, a man no longer knows what he has seen; he may have been terrible, but he is ignorant of the fact. He has been surrounded there by combating ideas which possessed human faces, and had his head in the light of futurity. There were corpses laid low and phantoms standing upright; and the hours were colossal, and seemed hours of eternity. A man has lived in death, and shadows have passed. What was it? he has seen hands on which was blood; it was a deafening din, but at the same time a startling silence: there were open mouths that cried, and other open mouths which were silent, and men were in smoke, perhaps in night. A man fancies he has touched the sinister dripping of unknown depths, and he looks at something red which he has in his nails, but he no longer recollects anything.

Let us return to the Rue de la Chanvrerie. Suddenly, between two discharges, the distant sound of a clock striking was heard.

"It is midday," said Combeferre.

The twelve strokes had not died out ere Enjolras drew himself up to his full height, and hurled the loud cry from the top of the barricade,—

"Take up the paving-stones into the house, and line the windows with them. One half of you to the stones, the other half to the muskets. There is not a moment to lose."

A party of sappers, with their axes on their shoulders, had just appeared in battle-array at the end of the street. This could only be the head of a column: and of what column? evidently the column of attack; for the sappers ordered to demolish the barricade always precede the troops told off to escalade it. It was plain that the moment was at hand which M. Clermont Tonnerre called in 1822 "the last attempt."

Enjolras's order was carried out with that correct speed peculiar to ships and barricades, the only two battle-fields whence escape is impossible. In less than a minute two-thirds of the paving-stones which Enjolras had ordered to be piled up

against the door of Corinth were carried to the first floor and attic, and before a second minute had passed these paving-stones, artistically laid on one another, walled up one half of the window. A few spaces carefully arranged by Feuilly, the chief constructor, allowed the gun-barrels to pass through. This armament of the windows was the more easily effected because the grape-shot had ceased. The two cannon were now firing solid shot at the centre of the barricade, in order to make a hole, and if possible a breach, for the assault. When the stones intended for the final assault were in their places, Enjolras carried to the first floor the bottles he had placed under the table on which Mabeuf lay.

"Who will drink that?" Bossuet asked him.

"They will," Enjolras answered.

Then the ground-floor window was also barricaded, and the iron bars which closed the door at night were held in readiness. The fortress was complete, the barricade was the rampart, and the wineshop the keep. With the paving-stones left over the gap was stopped up. As the defenders of a barricade are always obliged to save their ammunition, and the besiegers are aware of the fact, the latter combine their arrangements with a sort of irritating leisure, expose themselves before the time to the fire, though more apparently than in reality, and take their ease. The preparations for the attack are always made with a certain methodical slowness, and after that comes the thunder. This slowness enabled Enjolras to revise and render everything perfect. He felt that since such men were about to die their death must be a masterpiece. He said to Marius,—

"We are the two chiefs. I am going to give the final orders inside, while you remain outside and watch."

Marius posted himself in observation on the crest of the barricade, while Enjolras had the door of the kitchen, which it will be remembered served as ambulance, nailed up.

"No spattering on the wounded," he said.

He gave his final instructions in the ground-floor room in a sharp but wonderfully calm voice, and Feuilly listened and answered in the name of all.

"Have axes ready on the first floor to cut down the stairs. Have you them?"

"Yes," Feuilly answered.

"How many?"

"Two axes and a crowbar."

"Very good. In all twenty-six fighting men left. How many guns are there?"

"Thirty-four."

"Eight too many. Keep those guns loaded like the others, and within reach. Place your sabres and pistols in your belts. Twenty men to the barricade. Six will ambush themselves in the garret and at the first-floor window, to fire on the assailants through the loop-holes in the paving-stones. There must not be an idle workman here. Presently, when the drummer sounds the charge, the twenty men below will rush to the barricade, and the first to arrive will be the best placed."

These arrangements made, he turned to Javert, and said to him,—

"I have not forgotten you."

And laying a pistol on the table he added,—

"The last man to leave here will blow out this spy's brains."

"Here?" a voice answered.

"No, let us not have this corpse near ours. It is easy to stride over the small barricade in Mondétour lane, as it is only four feet high. This man is securely bound, so lead him there and execute him."

Some one was at this moment even more stoical than Enjolras,—it was Javert. Here Jean Valjean appeared; he was mixed up with the group of insurgents, but stepped forward and said to Enjolras,

"Are you the Commandant?"

"Yes."

"You thanked me just now."

"In the name of the Republic. The barricade has two saviours, Marius Pontmercy and yourself."

"Do you think that I deserve a reward?"

"Certainly."

"Well, then, I ask one."

"What is it?"

"To let me blow out that man's brains myself."

Javert raised his head, saw Jean Valjean, gave an imperceptible start, and said,—"It is fair."

As for Enjolras, he was reloading his gun. He looked around him.

"Is there no objection?"

And he turned to Jean Valjean.

"Take the spy."

Jean Valjean took possession of Javert by seating himself on the end of the table. He seized the pistol, and a faint clink showed that he had cocked it. Almost at the same moment the bugle-call was heard.

"Mind yourselves," Marius shouted from the top of the barricade.

Javert began laughing that noiseless laugh peculiar to him, and, looking intently at the insurgents, said to them,—

"You are no healthier than I am."

"All outside," Enjolras cried.

The insurgents rushed tumultuously forth, and as they passed, Javert smote them on the back, so to speak, with the expression, "We shall meet again soon."

So soon as Jean Valjean was alone with Javert, he undid the rope which fastened the prisoner round the waist, the knot of which was under the table. After this, he made him a signal to rise. Javert obeyed with that indefinable smile, in which the supremacy of enthralled authority is condensed. Jean Valjean seized Javert by the martingale, as he would have taken an ox by its halter, and dragging him after him, quitted the wine-shop slowly, for Javert, having his feet hobbled, could only take very short steps. Jean Valjean held the pistol in his hand, and they thus crossed the inner trapeze of the barricade; the insurgents, prepared for the imminent attack, turned their backs.

Marius alone, placed at the left extremity of the barricade, saw them pass. This group of the victim and his hangman was illumined by the sepulchral gleams which he had in his soul. Jean Valjean forced Javert to climb over the barricade with some difficulty, but did not loosen the cord. When they had crossed the bar, they found themselves alone in the lane, and no one could now see them, for the elbow formed by the houses hid them from the insurgents. The corpses removed from the barricade formed a horrible pile a few paces from them. Among the dead could be distinguished a livid face, dishevelled hair, a pierced hand, and a half-naked female bosom; it was Eponine. Javert looked askance at this dead girl, and said with profound calmness,—

"I fancy I know that girl."

Then he turned to Jean Valjean, who placed the pistol under his arm, and fixed on Javert a glance which had no need of words to say, "Javert, it is I."

Javert answered, "Take your revenge."

Jean Valjean took a knife from his pocket and opened it.

"A clasp-knife," Javert exclaimed. "You are right, that suits you better."

Jean Valjean cut the martingale which Javert had round his neck, then he cut the ropes on his wrists, and stooping

down, those on his feet; then rising again, he said, " You are free."

It was not easy to astonish Javert, still, master though he was of himself, he could not suppress his emotion; he stood gaping and motionless, while Jean Valjean continued,—

" I do not believe that I shall leave this place. Still if by accident I do, I live under the name of Fauchelevent, at No. 7, Rue de l'Homme Armé."

Javert gave a tigerish frown, which opened a corner of his mouth, and muttered between his teeth,—

" Take care."

" Begone," said Jean Valjean.

Javert added,

" You said Fauchelevent, Rue de l'Homme Armé ? "

" No. 7."

Javert repeated in a low voice,— " No. 7."

He rebuttoned his frock-coat, restored his military stiffness between his shoulders, made a half turn, crossed his arms while supporting his chin with one of his hands, and walked off in the direction of the Halles. Jean Valjean looked after him. After going a few yards Javert turned and said,—

" You annoy me. I would sooner be killed by you."

Javert did not even notice that he no longer addressed Jean Valjean in the second person singular.

" Begone," said Valjean.

Javert retired slowly, and a moment after turned the corner of the Rue des Prêcheurs. When Javert had disappeared, Jean Valjean discharged the pistol in the air, and then returned to the barricade, saying,—

" It is all over."

This is what had taken place in the mean while. Marius, more occupied with the outside than the inside, had not hitherto attentively regarded the spy fastened up at the darkened end of the ground-floor room. When he saw him in the open day-light bestriding the barricade, he recognized him, and a sudden hope entered his mind. He remembered the inspector of the Rue de Pontoise, and the two pistols he had given him, which he, Marius, had employed at this very barricade, and he not only remembered his face but his name.

This recollection, however, was foggy and disturbed, like all his ideas. It was not an affirmation he made so much as a question which he asked himself. " Is that not the Police Inspector, who told me that his name was Javert ? " Marius shouted to Enjolras, who had just stationed himself at the other end of the barricade,—

"Enjolras?"

"Well?"

"What is that man's name?"

"Which man?"

"The police agent. Do you know his name?"

"Of course I do, for he told it to us."

"What is it?"

"Javert."

Marius started, but at this moment a pistol-shot was heard, and Jean Valjean reappeared, saying, "It is all over." A dark chill crossed Marius' heart.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE DEAD ARE RIGHT AND THE LIVING ARE NOT WRONG.

THE last hours of the barricade were about to begin, and everything added to the tragical majesty of this supreme moment; a thousand mysterious sounds in the air, the breathing of armed masses set in motion in streets which could not be seen, the intermittent gallop of cavalry, the heavy rumour of artillery, the platoon firing and the cannonade crossing each other in the labyrinth of Paris; the smoke of the battle rising golden above the roofs, distant and vaguely terrible cries, flashes of menace everywhere, the tocsin of St Merry, which now had the sound of a sob, the mildness of the season, the splendour of the sky full of sunshine and clouds, the beauty of the day and the fearful silence of the houses. For, since the previous evening, the two rows of houses in the Rue de la Chanvrerie had become two walls, ferocious walls with closed doors, closed windows, and closed shutters.

At that day, so different from the present time, when the hour arrived in which the people wished to end with a situation which had lasted too long, with a wounded charter or a legal country, when the universal wrath was diffused in the atmosphere, when the city consented to an upheaving of paving-stones, when the insurrection made the bourgeoisie smile by whispering its watchword in their ear, then the inhabitant, impregnated with riot, so to speak, was the auxiliary of the combatant, and the house fraternized with the improvised fortress which it supported. When the situation was not ripe,

when the insurrection was not decidedly accepted, when the masses disavowed the movement, it was all over with the combatants, the town was changed into a desert round the revolt, minds were chilled, the asylums were walled up, and the street became converted into a defile to help the army in taking the barricade. A people cannot be forced to move faster than it wishes by a surprise, and woe to the man who tries to compel it; a people will not put up with it, and then it abandons the insurrection to itself. The insurgents become lepers; a house is an escarpment, a door is a refusal, and a façade is a wall. This wall sees, hears, and will not; it might open and save you, but no, the wall is a judge, and it looks at you and condemns you. What gloomy things are these closed houses! they seem dead though they are alive, and life, which is, as it were, suspended, clings to them. No one has come out for the last four-and-twenty hours, but no one is absent. In the interior of this rock people come and go, retire to bed and rise again; they are in the bosom of their family, they eat and drink, and are afraid, terrible to say. Fear excuses this formidable inhospitality, and the alarm offers extenuating circumstances. At times even, and this has been witnessed, the fear becomes a passion, and terror may be changed into fury, and prudence into rage; hence the profound remark, "The enraged moderates." There are flashes of supreme terror, from which passion issues like a mournful smoke. "What do these people want? they are never satisfied, they compromise peaceable men. As if we had not had revolutions of that nature! what have they come to do here? let them get out of it as they can. All the worse for them, it is their fault, and they have only what they deserve. That does not concern us. Look at our poor street torn to pieces by cannon: they are a heap of scamps, and be very careful not to open the door." And the house assumes the aspect of a tomb: the insurgent dies a lingering death before their door; he sees the grape-shot and naked sabres arrive; if he cries out, he knows there are people who hear him, but will not help him; there are walls which might protect him, and men who might save him, and these walls have ears of flesh, and these men have entrails of stone.

Whom should we accuse? nobody and everybody, the imperfect times in which we live. It is always at its own risk and peril that the Utopia converts itself into an insurrection, and becomes an armed protest instead of a philosophic protest, a Pallas and no longer a Minerva. The Utopia which grows impatient and becomes a riot knows what awaits it, and it nearly always arrives too soon. In that case it resigns itself,

and stoically accepts the catastrophe, in lieu of a triumph. It serves, without complaining, and almost exculpating them, those who deny it, and its magnanimity is to consent to abandonment. It is indomitable against obstacles, and gentle toward ingratitude. Is it ingratitude after all? yes, from the human point of view; no, from the individual point of view. Progress is the fashion of man; the general life of the human race is called progress; and the collective step of the human race is also called progress. Progress marches; it makes the great celestial and human journey toward the celestial and divine; it has its halts where it rallies the straying flock; it has its stations where it meditates, in the presence of some splendid Canaan suddenly unveiling its horizon; it has its nights when it sleeps; and it is one of the poignant anxieties of the thinker to see the shadow on the human soul, and to feel in the darkness sleeping progress, without being able to awaken it.

God is perhaps dead, Gerard de Nerval said one day to the writer of these lines, confounding progress with God, and taking the interruption of the movement for the death of the Being. The man who despairs is wrong: progress infallibly reawakens, and we might say that it moves even when sleeping, for it has grown. When we see it upright again we find that it is taller. To be ever peaceful depends no more on progress than on the river; do not raise a bar, or throw in a rock, for the obstacle makes the water foam, and humanity boil. Hence come troubles, but after these troubles we notice that way has been made. Until order, which is nought else than universal peace, is established, until harmony and unity reign, progress will have revolutions for its halting-places. What, then, is progress? we have just said, the permanent life of the peoples. Now, it happens at times that the momentary life of individuals offers a resistance to the eternal life of the human race.

Let us avow without bitterness that the individual has his distinct interest, and can without felony stipulate for that interest and defend it; the present has its excusable amount of egotism, momentary right has its claims, and cannot be expected to sacrifice itself incessantly to the future. The generation which at the present moment is passing over the earth is not forced to abridge it, for the generations, its equals, after all, whose turn will come at a later date. "I exist," murmurs that some one, who is everybody. "I am young and in love, I am old and wish to rest, I am father of a family, I work, I prosper, I do a good business, I have houses to let, I have money in the funds, I am happy, I have wife and children, I like all that, I wish to live, and

so leave us at peace." Hence at certain hours a profound coldness falls on the magnanimous van-guard of the human race. Utopia, moreover, we confess it, emerges from its radiant sphere in waging war. It, the truth of to-morrow, borrows its process, battle, from the falsehood of yesterday. It, the future, acts like the past ; it, the pure idea, becomes an assault. It complicates its heroism with a violence for which it is but fair that it should answer ; a violence of opportunity and expediency, contrary to principles, and for which it is fatally punished. The Utopia, when in a state of insurrection, combats with the old military code in its hand ; it shoots spies, executes traitors, suppresses living beings, and hurls them into unknown darkness. It makes use of death, a serious thing. It seems that the Utopia no longer puts faith in the radiance, which is its irresistible and incorruptible strength. It strikes with the sword, but no sword is simple ; every sword has two edges, and the man who wounds with one wounds himself with the other.

This reservation made, and made with all severity, it is impossible for us not to admire, whether they succeed or no, the glorious combatants of the future, the confessors of the Utopia. Even when they fail they are venerable, and it is perhaps in ill-success that they possess most majesty. Victory, when in accordance with progress, deserves the applause of the peoples, but an heroic defeat merits their tenderness. The one is magnificent, the other sublime. With us who prefer martyrdom to success, John Brown is greater than Washington, and Pisacane greater than Garibaldi. There should be somebody to take the part of the conquered, and people are unjust to these great essayers of the future when they fail. Revolutionists are accused of sowing terror, and every barricade appears an attack. Their theory is incriminated, their object is suspected, their after-thought is apprehended, and their conscience is denounced. They are reproached with elevating and erecting against the reigning social fact a pile of miseries, griefs, iniquities, and despair, and with pulling down in order to barricade themselves behind the ruins and combat. People shout to them, " You are unpaving Hades," and they might answer, " That is the reason why our barricade is made of good intentions." The best thing is certainly the pacific solution ; after all, let us allow, when people see the pavement, they think of the bear, and it is a good will by which society is alarmed. But it depends on society to save itself, and we appeal to its own good will. No violent remedy is necessary : study the evil amicably, and then cure it,—that is all we desire.

However this may be, those men, even when they have fallen, and especially then, are august, who at all points of the universe, with their eyes fixed on France, are struggling for the great work with the inflexible logic of the ideal ; they give their life as a pure gift for progress, they accomplish the will of Providence, and perform a religious act. At the appointed hour, with as much disinterestedness as an actor who takes up his cue, they enter the tomb in obedience to the divine scenario, and they accept this hopeless combat and this stoical disappearance in order to lead to its splendid and superior universal consequences. The magnificent human movement irresistibly began on July 14. These soldiers are priests, and the French revolution is a deed of God. Moreover, there are—and it is proper to add this distinction to the distinctions already indicated in another chapter,—there are accepted insurrections which are called revolutions ; and there are rejected revolutions which are called riots. An insurrection which breaks out is an idea which passes its examination in the presence of the people. If the people drops its black-ball, the idea is dry fruit, and the insurrection is a street-riot. Waging war at every appeal and each time that the Utopia desires it is not the fact of the peoples ; for nations have not always, and at all hours, the temperament of heroes and martyrs. They are positive ; *à priori* insurrection is repulsive to them, in the first place, because it frequently has a catastrophe for result, and, secondly, because it always has an abstraction as its starting-point.

For, and this is a grand fact, those who devote themselves do so for the ideal, and the ideal alone. An insurrection is an enthusiasm, and enthusiasm may become a fury, whence comes an upraising of muskets. But every insurrection which aims at a government or a regime aims higher. Hence, for instance, we will dwell on the fact that what the chiefs of the insurrection of 1832, and especially the young enthusiasts of the Rue de la Chanvrerie, combated was not precisely Louis Philippe. The majority, speaking candidly, did justice to the qualities of this king who stood between monarchy and revolution, and not one of them hated him. But they attacked the younger branch of the right divine in Louis Philippe, as they had attacked the elder branch in Charles X., and what they wished to overthrow in overthrowing the Monarchy in France was, as we have explained, the usurpation of man over man, and the privilege opposing right throughout the universe. Paris without a king has as its counterstroke the world without despots.

They reasoned in this way, and though their object was doubtless remote, vague perhaps, and recoiling before the effort, it was grand.

So it is. And men sacrifice themselves for these visions, which are for the sacrificed nearly always illusions, but illusions with which the whole of human certainty is mingled. The insurgent poeticizes and gilds the insurrection, and men hurl themselves into these tragical things, intoxicating themselves upon what they are about to do. Who knows? perhaps they will succeed; they are the minority; they have against them an entire army; but they are defending the right, natural law, the sovereignty of each over himself, which allows of no possible abdication, justice, and truth, and, if necessary, they die like the three hundred Spartans. They do not think of Don Quixote, but of Leonidas, and they go onward, and once the battle has begun they do not recoil, but dash forward head downwards, having for hope an extraordinary victory, the revolution completed, progress restored to liberty, the aggrandisement of the human race, universal deliverance, and at the worst a Thermopylæ. These combats for progress frequently fail, and we have explained the cause. The mob is restive against the impulse of the Paladins; the heavy masses, the multitudes, fragile on account of their very heaviness, fear adventures, and there is adventure in the ideal. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that these are interests which are no great friends of the ideal and the sentimental. Sometimes the stomach paralyzes the heart. The greatness and beauty of France are, that she does not grow so stout as other nations, and knots the rope round her hips with greater facility. She is the first to wake and the last to fall asleep; she goes forward and seeks. The reason of this is because she is artistic.

The ideal is nought else than the culminating point of logic, in the same way as the beautiful is only the summit of the true. Artistic peoples are also consistent peoples; loving beauty is to see light. The result of this is, that the torch of Europe, that is to say of civilization, was first borne by Greece, who passed it to Italy, who passed it to France, *vitai lampada tradunt*. It is an admirable thing that the poesy of a people is the element of its progress, and the amount of civilization is measured by the amount of imagination. Still, a civilizing people must remain masculine; Corinth yes, but Sybaris no, for the man who grows effeminate is bastardized. A man must be neither dilettante nor virtuoso, but he should be artistic. In the matter of civilization, there must not be refinement, but sublimation, and on that condition the pattern of the ideal is

given to the human race. The modern ideal has its type in art, and its means in science. It is by science that the august vision of the poet, the social beauty, will be realized, and Eden will be remade by A and B. At the point which civilization has reached exactitude is a necessary element of the splendid, and the artistic feeling is not only served but completed by the scientific organ ; the dream must calculate. Art, which is the conqueror, ought to have science, which is the mover, as its base. The strength of the steed is an important factor, and the modern mind is the genius of Greece, having for vehicle the genius of India—Alexander mounted on an elephant. Races petrified in dogma, or demoralized by time, are unsuited to act as guides to civilization. Genuflection before the idol or the crown-piece ruins the muscle which moves and the will that goes. Hieratic or mercantile absorption reduces the radiance of a people, lowers its horizon by lowering its level, and withdraws from it that both human and divine intelligence of the universal object, which renders nations missionaries. Babylon has no ideal, nor has Carthage, while Athens and Rome have, and retain, even through all the nocturnal density of ages, a halo of civilization.

France is of the same quality, as a people, as Greece and Rome ; she is Athenian through the beautiful, and Roman through her grandeur. Besides, she is good, and is more often than other nations in the humour for devotion and sacrifice. Still, this humour takes her and leaves her ; and this is the great danger for those who run when she merely wishes to walk, or who walk when she wishes to halt. France has her relapses into materialism, and at seasons the ideas which obstruct this sublime brain have nothing that recalls French grandeur, and are of the dimensions of a Missouri or a South Carolina. What is to be done ? the giantess plays the dwarf, and immense France feels a fancy for littleness. That is all. To this nothing can be said, for peoples like planets have the right to be eclipsed. And that is well, provided that light return and the eclipse does not degenerate into night. Dawn and resurrection are synonymous, and the reappearance of light is synonymous with the existence of the Ego. Let us state these facts calmly. Death on a barricade, or a tomb in exile, is an acceptable occasion for devotion, for the real name of devotion is disinterestedness. Let the abandoned be abandoned, let the exiles be exiled, and let us confine ourselves to imploring great nations not to recoil too far when they do recoil. Under the pretext of returning to reason, it is not necessary to go too far down the incline. Matter exists, the moment exists, interests

exist, the stomach exists, but the stomach must not be the sole wisdom. Momentary life has its rights, we admit, but permanent life has them also. Alas ! to have mounted does not prevent falling, and we see this in history more frequently than we wish ; a nation is illustrious, it tastes of the ideal, then it bites into the mud and finds it good, and when we ask it why it abandons Socrates for Falstaff, it replies, Because I am fond of statesmen.

One word before returning to the barricade. A battle like the one which we are describing at this moment is only a convulsion for the ideal. Impeded progress is sickly, and has such tragic attacks of epilepsy. This malady of progress, civil war, we have met as we passed along, and it is one of the social phases, at once an act and an interlude of that drama whose pivot is a social condemnation, and whose veritable title is *Progress*. Progress ! this cry, which we raise so frequently, is our entire thought, and at the point of our drama which we have reached, as the idea which it contains has still more than one trial to undergo, we may be permitted, even if we do not raise the veil, to let its gleams pierce through clearly. The book which the reader has before him at this moment is, from one end to the other, in its entirety and its details, whatever the intermittences, exceptions, and short-comings may be, the progress from evil to good, from injustice to justice, from falsehood to truth, from night to day, from appetite to conscience, from corruption to life, from bestiality to duty, from hell to heaven, and from nothingness to God. The starting-point is matter, the terminus the soul ; the hydra at the commencement, the angel at the end.

•CHAPTER XLIII.

THE HEROES.

SUDDENLY the drum beat the charge, and the attack was a hurricane. On the previous evening the barricade had been silently approached in the darkness as by a boa, but, at present, in broad daylight, within this gutted street, surprise was impossible ; besides, the armed force was unmasked, the cannon had begun the roaring, and the troops rushed upon the barricade. Fury was now skill. A powerful column of line infantry, in-

tersected at regular intervals by National Guards and dismounted Municipal Guards, and supported by heavy masses, that could be heard if not seen, debouched into the street at the double, with drums beating, bugles braying, bayonets levelled, and sappers in front, and imperturbable under the shower of projectiles dashed straight at the barricade with all the weight of a bronze battering-ram. But the wall held out firmly, and the insurgents fired impetuously; the escaladed barricade displayed a flashing mane. The attack was so violent that it was in a moment inundated by assailants; but it shook off the soldiers as the lion does the dogs, and it was only covered with besiegers as the cliff is with foam, to reappear a minute later scarped, black, and formidable.

The columns, compelled to fall back, remained massed in the street, exposed but terrible, and answered the redoubt by a tremendous musketry-fire. Any one who has seen fireworks will remember the piece composed of a cross-fire of lightnings, which is called a bouquet. Imagine this bouquet, no longer vertical but horizontal, and bearing at the end of each jet a bullet, slugs, or iron balls, and scattering death. The barricade was beneath it. On either side was equal resolution: the bravery was almost barbarous, and was complicated by a species of heroic ferocity which began with self-sacrifice. It was the epoch when a National Guard fought like a Zouave. The troops desired an end, and the insurrection wished to contend. The acceptance of death in the height of youth and health converts intrepidity into a frenzy, and each man in this action had the grandeur of the last hour. The street was covered with corpses. The barricade had Marius at one of its ends and Enjolras at the other. Enjolras, who carried the whole barricade in his head, reserved and concealed himself: three soldiers fell under his loophole without even seeing him, while Marius displayed himself openly, and made himself a mark. More than once half his body rose above the barricade. There is no more violent prodigal than a miser who takes the bit between his teeth, and no man more startling in action than a dreamer. Marius was formidable and pensive, and was in action as in a dream. He looked like a firing ghost. The cartridges of the besieged were exhausted, but not their sarcasms; and they laughed in the tornado of the tomb in which they stood. Courfeyrac was bare-headed.

"What have you done with your hat?" Bossuet asked him, and Courfeyrac answered,—

"They carried it away at last with cannon balls."
Or else they made haughty remarks.

"Can you understand," Feuilly exclaimed bitterly, "those men" (and he mentioned names, well-known and even celebrated names that belonged to the old army) "who promised to join us and pledged their honour to aid us, and who are generals, and abandon us?"

And Combeferre restricted himself to replying with a grave smile,—

"They are people who observe the rules of honour as they do the stars, a long distance off."

The interior of the barricade was so sown with torn cartridges that it seemed as if there had been a snow-storm. The assailants had the numbers and the insurgents the position. They were behind a wall, and crushed at point-blank range the soldiers who were stumbling over the dead and wounded. This barricade, built as it was, and admirably strengthened, was really one of those situations in which a handful of men holds a legion in check. Still, constantly recruited and growing beneath the shower of bullets, the column of attack inexorably approached, and now gradually, step by step, but certainly, contracted round the barricade.

The assaults succeeded each other, and the horror became constantly greater. Then there broke out on this pile of paving-stones, in this Rue de la Chanvrerie, a struggle worthy of the wall of Troy. These sallow, ragged, and exhausted men, who had not eaten for four-and-twenty hours, who had not slept, who had only a few rounds more to fire, who felt their empty pockets for cartridges—these men, nearly all wounded, with head or arm bound round with a blood-stained blackish rag, having holes in their coat from which the blood flew, scarce armed with bad guns and old rusty sabres, became Titans. The barricade was ten times approached, assaulted, escaladed, and never captured. To form an idea of the contest it would be necessary to imagine a heap of terrible courages set on fire, and that you are watching the flames. It was not a combat, but the interior of a furnace; mouths breathed flames there, and the faces were extraordinary. The human form seemed impossible there, the combatants flashed, and it was a formidable sight to see these salamanders of the medley flitting about in this red smoke. The successive and simultaneous scenes of this butchery are beyond our power to depict, for epic alone has the right to fill ten thousand verses with a battle. It might have been called that Inferno of Brahminism, the most formidable of the seventeen abysses, which the Veda calls the forest of swords. They fought foot to foot, body to body, with pistol-shots, sabre-cuts, and fists, close by, at a distance, above, below

on all sides, from the roof of the house, from the wine-shop, and even from the traps of the cellars into which some had slipped. The odds were sixty to one, and the frontage of Corinth half demolished was hideous. The window, pock-marked with grape-shot, had lost glass and frame, and was only a shapeless hole, tumultuously stopped up with paving-stones. Bossuet was killed, Feuilly was killed, Courfeyrac was killed, Joly was killed. Combeferre, traversed by three bayonet stabs in the breast at the moment when he was raising a wounded soldier, had only time to look up to heaven, and expired. Marius, still fighting, had received so many wounds, especially in the head, that his face disappeared in blood and looked as if it were covered by a red handkerchief. Enjolras alone was not wounded; when he had no weapon he held out his arm to the right or left, and an insurgent placed some instrument in his hand. He had only four broken sword-blades left, one more than Francis I. had at Marignano.

In our old poems of the Gesta, Esplandian attacks with a flaming faulchion the Marquis Géant Swantibore, who defends himself by storming the knight with towers which he uproots. Our old mural frescoes show us the two Dukes of Brittany and Bourbon armed for war and mounted, and approaching each other, axe in hand, masked with steel, shod with steel, gloved with steel, one caparisoned with ermine and the other draped in azure; Brittany with his lion between the two horns of his crown, and Bourbon with an enormous *fleur-de-lys* at his vizor. But, in order to be superb, it is not necessary to wear, like Yvon, the ducal morion, or to have in one hand a living flame like Esplandian; it is sufficient to lay down one's life for a conviction or a loyal deed. This little simple soldier, yesterday a peasant of Bearne or the Limousin, who prowls about, cabbage-cutter by his side, round the nursemaids in the Luxembourg, this young pale student bowed over an anatomical study or book, a fair-haired boy who shaves himself with a pair of scissors,—take them both, breathe duty into them, put them face to face in the Carrefour Boucherat or the Planche Mibray blind alley, and let one fight for his flag and the other combat for his ideal, and let them both imagine that they are contending for their country, and the struggle will be colossal; and the shadow cast by these two contending lads on the great epic field where humanity is struggling, will be equal to that thrown by Megarion, King of Lycia abounding in tigers, as he wrestles with the immense Ajax, the equal of the gods.

CHAPTER XLIV.

FOOT TO FOOT.

WHEN there were no chiefs left but Enjolras and Marius at the two ends of the barricade, the centre, which had so long been supported by Courfeyrac, Bossuet, Joly, Feuilly, and Combeferre, yielded. The cannon, without making a practicable breach, had severely injured the centre of the redoubt, then the crest of the wall had disappeared under the balls and fallen down, and the fragments which had collected both inside and out had in the end formed two slopes, the outer one of which offered an inclined plane by which to attack. A final assault was attempted thus, and this assault was successful ; the bristling mass of bayonets, hurled forward at a run, came up irresistibly, and the dense line of the attacking column appeared in the smoke on the top of the scarp. This time it was all over, and the band of insurgents defending the centre recoiled pell-mell.

Then the gloomy love of life was rekindled in some ; covered by this forest of muskets, several did not wish to die. It is the moment when the spirit of self-preservation utters yells, and when the beast reappears in man. They were drawn up against the six-storeyed house at the back of the barricade, and this house might be their salvation. This house was barricaded, as it were walled up from top to bottom, but before the troops reached the interior of the redoubt, a door would have time to open and shut, and it would be life for these desperate men, for at the back of this house were streets, possible flight, and space. They began kicking and knocking at the door, while calling, crying, imploring, and clasping their hands. But no one opened. The dead head looked down on them from the third-floor window. But Marius and Enjolras, and seven or eight men who rallied round them, had rushed forward to protect them. Enjolras shouted to the soldiers, Do not advance, and as an officer declined to obey he killed the officer. He was in the inner yard of the redoubt, close to Corinth, with his sword in one hand and carbine in the other, holding open the door of the wine-shop, which he barred against the assailants. He shouted to the desperate men, "There is only one door open, and it is this one," and covering them with his person, and alone facing a battalion, he made them pass behind him.

All rushed in, and Enjolras, whirling his musket round his head, drove back the bayonets and entered the last, and there was a frightful moment, during which the troops tried to enter and the insurgents to bar the door. The latter was closed with such violence that the five fingers of a soldier who had caught hold of the door-post were cut off clean, and remained in the crevice. Marius remained outside; a bullet broke his collar-bone, and he felt himself fainting and falling. At this moment, when his eyes were already closed, he felt the shock of a powerful hand seizing him, and his fainting-fit scarce left him time for this thought, blended with the supreme recollection of Cosette, "I am made prisoner and shall be shot."

Enjolras, not seeing Marius among those who had sought shelter in the house, had the same idea, but they had reached that moment when each could only think of his own death. Enjolras put the bar on the door, bolted and locked it, while the soldiers beat it with musket-butts, and the sappers attacked it with their axes outside. The assailants were grouped round this door, and the siege of the wine-shop now began. The soldiers, let us add, were full of fury; the death of the sergeant of artillery had irritated them, and then, more mournful still, during the few hours that preceded the attack a whisper ran along the ranks that the insurgents were mutilating their prisoners, and that there was the headless body of a soldier in the cellar. This species of fatal rumour is the general accompaniment of civil wars, and it was a false report of the same nature which at a later date produced the catastrophe of the Rue Transnonain. When the door was secured Enjolras said to the others,—

"Let us sell our lives dearly."

Then he went up to the table on which Mabœuf and Gavroche were lying; under the black cloth two forms could be seen straight and livid, one tall, the other short, and the two faces were vaguely designed under the cold folds of the winding-sheet. A hand emerged from under it, and hung toward the ground; it was the old man. Enjolras bent down and kissed this venerable hand, in the same way as he had done the forehead on the previous evening. They were the only two kisses he had ever given in his life.

Let us abridge. The barricade had resisted like a gate of Thebes, and the wine-shop resisted like a house of Saragossa. Such resistances are violent, and there is no quarter, and a flag of truce is impossible; people are willing to die provided that they can kill. When Suchet says "capitulate," Palafox an-

swers, "After the war with cannon, the war with the knife." Nothing was wanting in the attack on the Hucheloup wine-shop: neither paving-stone showering from the window and roof on the assailants, and exasperating the troops by the frightful damage they committed, nor shots from the attics and cellar, nor the fury of the attack, nor the rage of the defence, nor, finally, when the door gave way, the frenzied mania of extermination. When the assailants rushed into the wine-shop, their feet entangled in the panels of the broken door which lay on the ground, they did not find a single combatant. The winding staircase, cut away with axes, lay in the middle of the ground-floor room, a few wounded men were on the point of dying, all who were not killed were on the first floor, and a terrific fire was discharged thence through the hole in the ceiling which had been the entrance to the restaurant. These were the last cartridges, and when they were expended and nobody had any powder or balls left, each man took up two of the bottles reserved by Enjolras, and defended the stairs with these frightfully fragile weapons. They were bottles of aquafortis. We describe the gloomy things of carnage exactly as they are: the besieged makes a weapon of everything. Greek fire did not dishonour Archimedes, boiling pitch did not dishonour Bayard; every war is a horror, and there is no choice. The musketry fire of the assailants, though impeded and discharged from below, was murderous; and the brink of the hole was soon lined with dead heads, whence dripped long red and steaming jets. The noise was indescribable, and a compressed burning smoke almost threw night over the combat. Words fail to describe horror when it has reached this stage. There were no men in this now infernal struggle, they were no longer giants contending against Titans. It resembled Milton and Dante more than Homer, for demons attacked and spectres resisted. It was a monster heroism.

CHAPTER XLV.

ORESTES SOBER AND PYLADES DRUNK.

At length, by employing the skeleton of the staircase, by climbing up the walls, clinging to the ceiling and killing on

the very edge of the trap the last who resisted, some twenty assailants, soldiers, National and Municipal Guards, mostly disfigured by wounds in the face received in this formidable ascent, blinded by blood, furious and savage, burst into the first-floor room. There was only one man standing there—Enjolras; without cartridges or sword, he only held in his hand the barrel of his carbine, whose butt he had broken on the heads of those who entered. He had placed the billiard-table between himself and his assailants, he had fallen back to the end of the room, and there, with flashing eye and head erect, holding the piece of a weapon in his hand, he was still sufficiently alarming for a space to be formed round him. A cry was raised,—

“It is the chief; it was he who killed the artilleryman; as he has placed himself there, we will let him remain there. Shoot him on the spot.”

“Shoot me,” Enjolras said.

And, throwing away his weapon and folding his arms, he offered his chest. The boldness of dying bravely always moves men. So soon as Enjolras folded his arms, accepting the end, the din of the struggle ceased in the room, and the chaos was suddenly appeased in a species of sepulchral solemnity. It seemed as if the menacing majesty of Enjolras, disarmed and motionless, produced an effect on the tumult, and that merely by the authority of his tranquil glance, this young man, who alone was unwounded, superb, blood-stained, charming, and indifferent as an invulnerable, constrained this sinister mob to kill him respectfully. His beauty, heightened at this moment by his haughtiness, was dazzling, and as if he could be no more fatigued than wounded after the frightful four-and-twenty hours which had elapsed, he was fresh and rosy. It was to him that the witness referred when he said at a later date before the court martial, “There was an insurgent whom I heard called Apollo.” A National Guard who aimed at Enjolras lowered his musket, saying, “I feel as if I were going to kill a flower.” Twelve men formed into a platoon in the corner opposite to the one in which Enjolras stood, and got their muskets ready in silence. Then a sergeant shouted, “Present.”

An officer interposed.

“Wait a minute.”

And, addressing Enjolras,—

“Do you wish to have your eyes bandaged?”

“No.”

"It was really you who killed the sergeant of artillery?"

"Yes."

Grantaire had been awake for some minutes past. Grantaire, it will be remembered, had been sleeping since the past evening in the upper room with his head lying on a table. He realized in all its energy the old metaphor, dead drunk. The hideous philter of absinthe, stout, and alcohol, had thrown him into a lethargic state, and, as his table was small, and of no use at the barricade, they had left it him. He was still in the same posture, with his chest upon the table, his head reeling on his arms, and surrounded by glasses and bottles. He was sleeping the deadly sleep of the hibernating bear, or the filled leech. Nothing had roused him, neither the platoon fire, nor the cannon-balls, nor the canister which penetrated through the window into the room where he was, nor the prodigious noise of the assault. Still he at times responded to the cannon by a snore. He seemed to be waiting for a bullet to save him the trouble of waking; several corpses lay around him, and, at the first glance, nothing distinguished him from these deep sleepers of death.

Noise does not wake a drunkard, but silence arouses him, and this peculiarity has been more than once observed. The fall of anything near him increased Grantaire's lethargy, and noise lulled him. The species of halt which the tumult made before Enjolras was a shock for this heavy sleep, and it is the effect of a galloping coach which stops short. Grantaire started up, stretched out his arms, rubbed his eyes, looked, yawned, and understood. Intoxication wearing off resembles a curtain that is rent, and a man sees at once, and at a single glance, all that it concealed. Everything offers itself suddenly to the memory, and the drunkard, who knows nothing of what has happened during the last twenty-four hours, has scarce opened his eyes ere he understands it all. Ideas return with a sudden lucidity; the species of suds that blinded the brain is dispersed, and makes way for a clear and distinctive apprehension of the reality.

Concealed, as he was, in a corner, and sheltered, so to speak, by the billiard-table, the soldiers, who had their eyes fixed on Enjolras, had not even perceived Grantaire, and the sergeant was preparing to repeat the order to fire when all at once they heard a powerful voice crying at their side,—

"Long live the Republic! I belong to it."

Grantaire had risen; and the immense gleam of all the combat which he had missed appeared in the flashing glance of the transfigured drunkard. He repeated, "Long live the Re-

public!" crossed the room with a firm step, and placed himself before the muskets by Enjolras' side.

"Kill us both at once," he said.

And turning gently to Enjolras, he asked him,—

"Do you permit it?"

Enjolras pressed his hand with a smile, and this smile had not passed away ere the detonation took place. Enjolras, traversed by eight bullets, remained leaning against the wall, as if nailed to it; he merely hung his head; Grantaire was lying stark dead at his feet. A few minutes later the soldiers dislodged the last insurgents who had taken refuge at the top of the house, and were firing through a partition in the garret. They fought desperately, and threw bodies out of windows, some still alive. Two voltigeurs, who were trying to raise the smashed omnibus, were killed by two shots from the attics; a man in a blouse rushed out of them, with a bayonet thrust in his stomach, and lay on the ground expiring. A private and insurgent slipped together down the tiles of the roof, and as they would not loosen their hold fell into the street, holding each other in a ferocious embrace. There was a similar struggle in the cellar; cries, shots, and a fierce clashing; then a silence. The barricade was captured, and the soldiers began searching the adjacent houses and pursuing the fugitives.

CHAPTER XLVI.

MARIUS was really a prisoner, prisoner to Jean Valjean; the hand which had clutched him behind at the moment when he was falling, and of which he felt the pressure as he lost his senses, was Jean Valjean's.

Jean Valjean had taken no other part in the struggle than that of exposing himself. Had it not been for him, in the supreme moment of agony no one would have thought of the wounded. Thanks to him, who was everywhere present in the carnage like a Providence, those who fell were picked up, carried to the ground-floor room, and had their wounds dressed, and in the intervals he repaired the barricade. But nothing that could resemble a blow, an attack, or even personal defence, could be seen with him, and he kept quiet and succoured.

However, he had only a few scratches ; and the bullets had no billet for him. If suicide formed part of what he dreamed of when he came to this sepulchre, he had not been successful, but we doubt whether he thought of suicide, which is an irreligious act. Jean Valjean did not appear to see Marius in the thick of the combat, but in truth he did not take his eyes off him. When a bullet laid Marius low Jean Valjean leaped upon him with the agility of a tiger, dashed upon him as on a prey, and carried him off.

The whirlwind of the attack was at this moment so violently concentrated on Enjolras and the door of the wine-shop that no one saw Jean Valjean, supporting the fainting Marius in his arms, cross the unpaved ground of the barricade, and disappear round the corner of Corinth. Our readers will remember this corner, which formed a sort of cape in the street, and protected a few square feet of ground from bullets and grape-shot, and from glances as well. There is thus at times in fires a room which does not burn, and in the most raging seas, beyond a promontory, or at the end of a reef, a little quiet nook. It was in this corner of the inner trapeze of the barricade that Eponine drew her last breath. Here Jean Valjean stopped, let Marius slip to the ground, leant against a wall, and looked around him.

The situation was frightful ; for the instant, for two or three minutes perhaps, this piece of wall was a shelter, but how to get out of this massacre ? He recalled the agony he had felt in the Rue Polonceau, eight years previously, and in what way he had succeeded in escaping ; it was difficult then, but now it was impossible. He had in front of him that implacable and silent six-storeyed house, which only seemed inhabited by the dead man leaning out of his window ; he had on his right the low barricade which closed the Petite Truanderie ; to climb over this obstacle appeared easy, but a row of bayonet-points could be seen over the crest of the barricade ; they were line troops posted beyond the barricade and on the watch. It was evident that crossing the barricade was seeking a platoon fire, and that any head which appeared above the wall of paving-stones would serve as a mark for sixty muskets. He had on his left the battle-field, and death was behind the corner of the wall.

What was he to do ? a bird alone could have escaped from this place. And he must decide at once, find an expedient, and make up his mind. They were fighting a few paces from him, but fortunately all were obstinately engaged at one point, the wine-shop door, but if a single soldier had the idea of turning the house or attacking it on the flank all would be over. Jean

Valjean looked at the house opposite to him, he looked at the barricade by his side, and then looked on the ground, with the violence of supreme extremity, wildly, and as if he would have liked to dig a hole with his eyes. By force of looking, something vaguely discernible in such an agony was designed, and assumed a shape at his feet, as if the eyes had the power to produce the thing demanded. He perceived a few paces from him, at the foot of the small barricade so pitilessly guarded and watched from without, and beneath a pile of paving-stones which almost concealed it, an iron grating, laid flat and flush with the ground. This grating made of strong cross bars was about two-feet square, and the framework of paving-stones which supported it had been torn out, and it was as it were dismounted. Through the bars a glimpse could be caught of an obscure opening, something like a chimney-pot or the cylinder of a cistern. Jean Valjean dashed up, and his old skill in escapes rose to his brain like a beam of light. To remove the paving-stones, tear up the grating, take Marius, who was inert as a dead body, on his shoulders, descend with this burden on his loins, helping himself with his elbows and knees, into this sort of well which was fortunately of no great depth, to let the grating fall again over his head, to set foot on a paved surface, about ten feet below the earth, all this was executed like something done in delirium, with a giant's strength and the rapidity of an eagle: this occupied but a few minutes. Jean Valjean found himself with the still fainting Marius in a sort of long subterranean corridor, where there was profound peace, absolute silence, and night. The impression which he had formerly felt in falling out of the street into the convent recurred to him, still what he now carried was not Cosette, but Marius.

He had scarce heard above his head like a vague murmur the formidable tumult of the wine-shop being taken by assault.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE EARTH IMPOVERISHED BY THE SEA.

PARIS casts twenty-five millions of francs annually into the sea, and we assert this without any metaphor. How so, and in what way? by day and night. For what object? for no object. With what thought? without thinking. What to do?

nothing. By means of what organ? its intestines. What are its intestines? its sewers. Twenty-five millions are the most moderate of the approximative amounts given by the estimates of modern science. Science, after groping for a long time, knows now that the most fertilizing and effective of manures is human manure. The Chinese, let us say it to our shame, knew this before we did; not a Chinese peasant—it is Eckeberg who states the fact—who goes to the city, but brings at either end of his bamboo a bucket full of what we call filth. Thanks to the human manure, the soil in China is still as youthful as in the days of Abraham, and Chinese wheat yields just one hundred and twenty fold the sowing. There is no guano comparable in fertility to the detritus of a capital, and a large city is the most important of dungmixons. To employ the town in manuring the plain would be certain success, for if gold be dross, on the other hand our dross is gold.

What is done with this golden dung? it is swept into the gulf. We send at a great expense fleets of ships to collect at the southern pole the guano of petrels and penguins, and cast into the sea the incalculable element of wealth which we have under our hand. All the human and animal manure which the world loses, if returned to the land instead of being thrown into the sea, would suffice to nourish the world. Do you know what those piles of ordure are, collected at the corners of streets, those carts of mud carried off at night from the streets, the frightful barrels of the night-man, and the fetid streams of subterranean mud which the pavement conceals from you? All this a flowering field, it is green grass, it is mint and thyme and sage, it is game, it is cattle, it is the satisfied lowing of heavy kine at night, it is perfumed hay, it is gilded wheat, it is bread on your table, it is warm blood in your veins, it is health, it is joy, it is life. So desires that mysterious creation, which is transformation on earth, and transfiguration in heaven; restore this to the great crucible, and your abundance will issue from it, for the nutrition of the plains produces the nourishment of men. You are at liberty to lose this wealth and consider me ridiculous into the bargain; it would be the masterpiece of your ignorance. Statistics have calculated that France alone pours every year into the Atlantic a sum of half a milliard. Note this; with these five hundred millions one quarter of the expenses of the budget would be paid. The cleverness of man is so great that he prefers to get rid of these five hundred millions in the gutter. The very substance of the people is borne away, here drop by drop, and there in streams, by the wretched vomiting of our sewers into the rivers, and the gigantic vomiting of our

rivers into ocean. Each eruption of our drains costs us one thousand francs, and this has two results ; the earth impoverished and the water poisoned ; hunger issuing from the furrow and illness from the river. It is notorious that at this very hour the Thames poisons London ; and as regards Paris, it has been found necessary to remove most of the mouths of the sewers down the river below the last bridge.

A double tubular apparatus supplied with valves and flood-gates, a system of elementary drainage as simple as the human lungs, and which is already in full work in several English parishes, would suffice to bring into our towns the pure water of the fields and send to the fields the rich water of the towns, and this easy ebb and flow, the most simple in the world, would retain among us the five hundred millions thrown away. But people are thinking of other things. The present process does mischief while meaning well. The intention is good, but the result is sorrowful ; they believe they are draining the city, while they are destroying the population. A sewer is a misunderstanding, and when drainage, with its double functions, restoring what it takes, is everywhere substituted for the sewer, that simple and impoverishing washing, and is also combined with the data of a new social economy, the produce of the soil will be increased ten-fold, and the problem of misery will be singularly attenuated. Add the suppression of parasitisms, and it will be solved. In the mean while the public wealth goes to the river, and a sinking takes place,—sinking is the right word, for Europe is being ruined in this way by exhaustion. As for France, we have mentioned the figures. Now, as Paris contains one twenty-fifth of the whole French population, and the Parisian guano is the richest of all, we are beneath the truth when we estimate at twenty-five millions the share of Paris in the half-milliard which France annually refuses. These twenty-five millions, employed in assistance and enjoyment, would double the splendour of Paris, and the city expends them in sewers. So that we may say, the great prodigality of Paris, its marvellous fête, its Folie Beaujon, its orgie, its lavishing of gold, its luxury, splendour, and magnificence, is its sewerage. It is in this way that in the blindness of a bad political economy, people allow the comfort of all to be drowned and wasted in the water ; there ought to be St Cloud nets to catch the public fortunes.

Economically regarded, the fact may be resumed thus ; Paris is a Danaë's cask. Paris, that model city, that pattern of well-conducted capitals, of which every people strives to have a copy, that metropolis of the ideal, that august home of initia-

tive, impulse, and experiment, that centre and gathering-place of minds, that nation city, that bee-hive of the future, that marvellous composite of Babylon and Corinth, would make a peasant of Fo-Kian shrug his shoulders, from our present point of view. Imitate Paris, and you will ruin yourself; moreover, Paris imitates itself particularly in this immemorial and insensate squandering. These surprising follies are not new; it is no youthful nonsense. The ancients acted like the moderns. "The drains of Rome," says Liebig, "absorbed the entire welfare of the Roman peasant." When the Campagna of Rome was ruined by the Roman drains, Rome exhausted Italy, and when it had placed Italy in its cloaca, it poured into it Sicily, and then Sardinia, and then Africa. The drains of Rome swallowed up the world, and this cloaca offered its tunnels to the city and to the world. *Urbi et orbi.* Eternal city and unfathomable drain.

For these things, as for others, Rome gives the example, and this example Paris follows with all the folly peculiar to witty cities. For the requirements of the operation which we have been explaining, Paris has beneath it another Paris, a Paris of sewers, which has its streets, squares, lanes, arteries, and circulation, which is mud, with the human forces at least. For nothing must be flattered, not even a great people; where there is everything, there is ignominy by the side of sublimity, and if Paris contain Athens, the city of light, Tyre, the city of power, Sparta, the city of virtue, Nineveh, the city of prodigies, it also contains Lutetia, the city of mud. Moreover, the stamp of its power is there too, and the Titanic sewer of Paris realizes among monuments the strange ideal realized in humanity by a few men like Machiavelli, Bacon, and Mirabeau; the grand abject. The sub-soil of Paris, if the eye could pierce the surface, would offer the aspect of a gigantic madrepore; a sponge has not more passages and holes than the piece of ground, six leagues in circumference, upon which the old great city rests. Without alluding to the catacombs, which are a separate cellar, without speaking of the inextricable net of gas-pipes, without referring to the vast tubular system for the distribution of running-water, the drains alone form on either bank of the river a prodigious dark ramification, a labyrinth which has its incline for its clue. In the damp mist of this labyrinth is seen the rat, which seems the produce of the accouchement of Paris.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE OLD HISTORY OF THE SEWER.

If we imagine Paris removed like a cover, the subterranean net-work of drains, regarded from a bird's-eye view, would represent on either bank a sort of large branch grafted upon the river. On the right bank the encircling sewer will be the trunk of this branch, the secondary tubes the branches, and the blind alleys the twigs. This figure is only summary and half correct, as the right angle, which is the usual angle in subterranean ramifications of this nature, is very rare in vegetation. Our readers will form a better likeness of this strange geometric plan by supposing that they see lying on a bed of darkness some strange Oriental alphabet as confused as a thicket, and whose shapeless letters are welded to each other in an apparent confusion, and as if accidentally, here by their angles and there by their ends. The sewers and drains played a great part in the middle ages, under the Lower Empire and in the old last. Plague sprang from them and despots died of it. The multitudes regarded almost with a religious awe these beds of corruption, these monstrous cradles of death. The vermin-ditch at Benares is not more fearful than the Lion's den at Babylon. Tiglath-Pileser, according to the rabbinical books, swore by the sink of Nineveh. It was from the drain of Munster that John of Leyden produced his false moon, and it was from the cesspool-well of Kekhscheb, that his Oriental Menœchmus, Mokannah, the veiled prophet of Korassan, brought his false sun.

The history of men is reflected in the history of the sewers, and the Gemoniæ narrated the story of Rome. The drain of Paris is an old formidable thing, it has been a sepulchre, and it has been an asylum. Crime, intellect, the social protest, liberty of conscience, thought, robbery, all that human laws pursue or have pursued, have concealed themselves in this den, the Maillotins in the fourteenth century, the cloak-stealers in the fifteenth, the Huguenots in the sixteenth, the illuminés of Morin in the seventeenth, and the Chauffeurs in the eighteenth. One hundred years ago the nocturnal dagger issued from it, and the rogue in danger glided into it; the wood had the cave and Paris had the drain. The Truanderie, that Gallic *picareria*, accepted the drain as an annexe of the Court of Miracles, and at

night, cunning and ferocious, entered beneath the Maubuée vomitory as into an alcove. It was very simple that those who had for their place of daily toil the Vide-Gousset lane, or the Rue Coupe-Gorge, should have for their nightly abode the Ponceau of the Chemin-Vert or the Hurepoix cagnard. Hence comes a swarm of recollections, all sorts of phantoms haunt these long solitary corridors, on all sides are putridity and miasma, and here and there is a trap through which Villon inside converses with Rabelais outside.

The drain in old Paris is the meeting-place of all exhaustions and of all experiments ; political economy sees there a detritus, and social philosophy a residuum. The drain is the conscience of the city, and everything converges and is confronted there. In this livid spot there is darkness, but there are no secrets. Each thing has its true form, or at least its definitive form. The pile of ordure has this in its favour, that it tells no falsehood, and simplicity has taken refuge there. Basile's mask is found there, but you see the pasteboard, the threads, the inside and out, and it is marked with honest filth. Scapin's false nose is lying close by. All the uncleanlinesses of civilization, where no longer of service, fall into this pit of truth ; they are swallowed up, but display themselves in it. This pell-mell is a confession : there no false appearance nor any plastering is possible, order takes off its shirt, there is an absolute nudity, a rout of illusions and mirage, and there nothing but what is assuming the gloomy face of what is finishing. Reality and disappearance. There a bottle-heel confesses intoxication, and a basket-handle talks about domesticity ; there, the apple core which has had literary opinions becomes once again the apple core, the effigy on the double sou grows frankly vert-de-grised, the saliva of Caiphas meets the vomit of Falstaff, the louis-d'or which comes from the gambling-hell dashes against the nail whence hangs the end of the suicide's rope, a livid foetus rolls along wrapped in spangles, which danced last Shrove Tuesday at the opera, a wig which has judged men wallows by the side of a rottenness which was Margoton's petticoat : it is more than fraternity, it is the extremest familiarity. All that painted itself is bedaubed, and the last veil is torn away. The drain is a cynic and says everything. This sincerity of uncleanliness pleases us and reposes the mind. When a man has spent his time upon the earth in undergoing the great airs assumed by state reasons, the oath, political wisdom, human justice, professional probity, the austerities of the situation, and incorruptible robes, it relieves him to enter a drain and see there the mud which becomes it.

It is instructive at the same time, for, as we said just now, history passes through the drain. St Bartholomew filters there drop by drop through the paving-stones, and great public assassinations, political and religious butcheries, traverse this subterranean way of civilization, and thrust their corpses into it. For the eye of the dreamer all historical murderers are there, in the hideous gloom, on their knees, with a bit of their winding-sheet for an apron, and, mournfully sponging their task. Louis XI. is there with Tristan, Francis I. is there with Duprat, Charles IX. is there with his mother, Richelieu is there with Louis XIII., Louvois is there, Letellier is there, Hebert and Maillard are there, scratching the stones, and trying to efface the trace of their deeds. The brooms of these spectres can be heard under these vaults, and the enormous fetidness of social catastrophes is breathed there. You see in corners red flashes, and a terrible water flows there in which blood-stained hands have been washed.

The social observer should enter these shadows, for they form part of his laboratory. Philosophy is the microscope of thought ; everything strives to fly from it, but nothing escapes it. Tergiversation is useless, for what side of himself does a man show in tergiversating ? his ashamed side. Philosophy pursues evil with its upright glance, and does not allow it to escape into nothingness. It recognizes everything in the effacement of disappearing things, and in the diminution of vanishing things. It reconstructs the purple after the rags, and the woman after the tatters. With the sewer it re-makes the town ; with the mud it re-makes manners. It judges from the potsherds whether it were an amphora or an earthenware jar. It recognizes by a nail mark on a parchment the difference which separates the Jewry of the Juden-gasse from the Jewry of the Ghetto. It finds again in what is left what has been, the good, the bad, the false, the true, the patch of blood in the palace, the ink-stain of the cavern, the tallow drop of the brothel, trials undergone, temptations welcome, orgies vomited up, the wrinkle which characters have formed in abasing themselves, the traces of prostitution in the souls which their coarseness rendered capable of it, and under the vest of the porters of Rome the elbow nudge of Messalina.

CHAPTER XLIX.

BRUNESEAU.

THE drain of Paris in the middle ages was legendary. In the sixteenth century Henry II. attempted soundings which failed, and not a hundred years ago, as Mercier testifies, the sewer was abandoned to itself, and became what it could. Such was that ancient Paris, handed over to quarrels, indecisions, and groping. It was for a long time thus stupid, and a later period, '89, showed how cities acquire sense. But in the good old times the capital had but little head; it did not know how to transact its business either morally or materially, and could no more sweep away its ordure than its abuses. Everything was an obstacle, everything raised a question. The drain, for instance, was refractory to any itinerary, and people could no more get on under the city than they did in it; above everything was unintelligible, below inextricable, beneath the confusion of tongues was the confusion of cellars, and Dædalus was mixed up with Babel. At times the drain of Paris thought proper to overflow, as if this misunderstood Nile had suddenly fallen into a passion. There were, infamous to relate, inundations of the drain. At moments this stomach of civilization digested badly, the sewer flowed back into the throat of the city, and Paris had the after-taste of its ordure. These resemblances of the drain to remorse had some good about them, for they were warnings, very badly taken, however; for the city was indignant that its mud should have so much boldness, and did not admit that the ordure should return. Get rid of it better.

The inundation of 1802 is in the memory of Parisians of eighty years of age. The mud spread across the Place des Victoires, on which is the statue of Louis XIV.; it entered Rue St Honoré by the two mouths of the drain of the Champs Elysées, Rue St Florentin by the St Florentin drain, Rue Pierre à Poisson by the drain of the Sonnerie, Rue Popincourt by the Chemin-Vert drain, and Rue de la Roquette by the Rue de Lappe drain; it covered the level of the Rue des Champs Elysées to a height of fourteen inches, and in the south, owing to the vomitory of the Seine performing its duties contrariwise, it entered Rue Mazarine, Rue de l'Echaudé, and Rue du Marais, where it stopped after running on a hundred and twenty yards,

just a few yards from the house which Racine had inhabited, respecting, in the seventeenth century, the poet more than the king. It reached its maximum depth in the Rue St Pierre, where it rose three feet above the gutter, and its maximum extent in the Rue St Sabin, where it extended over a length of two hundred and fifty yards.

At the beginning of the present century the drain of Paris was still a mysterious spot. Mud can never be well famed, but here the ill reputation extended almost to terror. Paris knew confusedly that it had beneath it a gruesome cave; people talked about it as of that monstrous cesspool of Thebes, in which centipedes fifteen feet in length swarmed, and which could have served as a bathing-place for Behemoth. The heavy sewers-men's boots never ventured beyond certain known points. It was still very close to the time when the scavengers' carts, from the top of which St Foix fraternized with the Marquis de Créqui, were simply unloaded into the drain. As for the cleansing, the duty was intrusted to the showers, which choked up rather than swept away. Rome allowed some poetry to her cloaca, and called it the Gemoniae, but Paris insulted its own, and called it the stench-hole. Science and superstition were agreed as to the horror, and the stench-hole was quite as repugnant to Hygiene as to the legend. The hobgoblin saw light under the fetid arches of the Mouffetard drain: the corpses of the Marmousets were thrown into the Barillerie drain: Fagot attributed the malignant fever of 1685 to the great opening of the Marais drain, which remained yawning until 1833 in the Rue St Louis, nearly opposite the sign of the Messages Galant. The mouth of the drain in the Rue de la Mortellerie was celebrated for the pestilences which issued from it; with its iron pointed grating that resembled a row of teeth it yawned in this fatal street like the throat of a dragon breathing hell on mankind. The popular imagination seasoned the gloomy Parisian sewer with some hideous mixture of infinitude: the drain was bottomless, the drain was a Barathrum, and the idea of exploring these leprous regions never even occurred to the police. Who would have dared to cast a sound into this darkness, and go on a journey of discovery in this abyss? It was frightful, and yet some one presented himself at last, and the cloaca had its Christopher Columbus.

One day, in 1805, during one of the rare apparitions which the Emperor made in Paris, the Minister of the Interior attended at his master's *petit lever*. In the court-yard could be heard the clanging sabres of all the extraordinary soldiers of

the great Republic and the great Empire ; there was a swarm of heroes at Napoleon's gates ; men of the Rhine, the Schelde, the Adage, and the Nile ; comrades of Joubert, of Desaix, of Marceau, Hoche, and Kleber, aeronauts of Fleurus, grenadiers of Mayence, pontooners of Genoa, hussars whom the Pyramids had gazed at, artillerymen who had been bespattered by Junot's cannon-balls, cuirassiers who had taken by assault the fleet anchored in the Zuyderzee ; some had followed Bonaparte upon the bridge of Lodi, others had accompanied Murat to the trenches of Mantua, while others had outstripped Lannes in the hollow way of Montebello. The whole army of that day was in the court of the Tuilleries, represented by a squadron or a company, and guarding the resting Napoleon ; and it was the splendid period when the great army had Marengo behind it and Austerlitz before it. "Sire," said the Minister of the Interior to Napoleon, "I have seen to-day the most intrepid man of your Empire." "Who is the man ?" the Emperor asked sharply, "and what has he done ?" "He wishes to do something, sire." "What is it ?" "To visit the drains of Paris." This man existed, and his name was Bruneseau.

The visit took place, and was a formidable campaign ; a nocturnal battle against asphyxia and plague. It was at the same time a voyage of discovery, and one of the survivors of the exploration, an intelligent workman, very young at that time, used to recount a few years ago the curious details which Bruneseau thought it right to omit in his report to the Prefect of Police, as unworthy of the administrative style. Disinfecting processes were very rudimentary at that day, and Bruneseau had scarce passed the first articulations of the subterranean network ere eight workmen out of twenty refused to go further. The operation was complicated, for the visit entailed cleansing : it was, therefore, requisite to cleanse and at the same time take measurements ; note the water entrances, count the traps and mouths, detail the branches, indicate the currents, recognize the respective dimensions of the different basins, sound the small drains grafted on the main sewer, measure the height under the key-stone of each passage, and the width both at the bottom and the top, in order to arrange the amount of water employed in flushing. They advanced with difficulty, and it was not rare for the ladders to sink into three feet of mud. The lanterns would scarce burn in the mephitic atmosphere, and from time to time a sewer-man was carried away in a fainting state. At certain spots there was a precipice ; the soil had given way, the stones were swallowed up, and the drain was converted into a lost well ; nothing solid could

be found, and they had great difficulty in dragging out a man who suddenly disappeared. By the advice of Fourcroy large cages filled with tow saturated with resin were set fire to at regular distances. The wall was covered at spots with shapeless fungi, which might have been called tumours, and the stone itself seemed ill in this unbreathable medium.

Bruneseau, in his exploration, proceeded down-hill. At the point where the two water-pipes of the Grand Hurleur separate he deciphered on a projecting stone the date 1550; this stone indicated the limit where Philibert Delorme, instructed by Henri II. to inspect the subways of Paris, stopped. This stone was the mark of the sixteenth century in the drain, and Bruneseau found the handiwork of the seventeenth in the conduit du Ponceau and that of the Rue Vieille du Temple, which were arched between 1600 and 1650, and the mark of the eighteenth in the west section of the collecting canal, enclosed and arched in 1740. These two arches, especially the younger one, that of 1740, were more decrepit and cracked than the masonry of the begirding drain, which dated from 1412, the period when the Menilmontant stream was raised to the dignity of the grand drain of Paris, a promotion analogous to that of a peasant who became first valet to the king; something like Grand Jean transformed into Lebel.

They fancied they recognized here and there, especially under the Palace of Justices, the form of old dungeons formed in the drain itself, hideous *in pace*. An iron collar hung in one of these cells, and they were all bricked up. A few of the things found were peculiar; among others the skeleton of an ourang-outang, which disappeared from the Jardin des Plantes in 1800, a disappearance probably connected with the famous and incontestable apparition of the fiend in the Rue des Bernardins in the last year of the eighteenth century. The poor animal eventually drowned itself in the drain. Under the long vaulted passage leading to the Arche Marion a rag-picker's *hotte* in a perfect state of preservation caused the admiration of connoisseurs. Everywhere the mud, which the sewer-men had come to handle intrepidly, abounded in precious objects; gold and silver, jewelry, precious stones, and coin. A giant who had filtered this cloaca would have found in his sieve the wealth of centuries. At the point where the two branches of the Rue du Temple and the Rue St Avoye divide, a singular copper Huguenot medal was picked up, bearing on one side a pig wearing a cardinal's hat, and on the other a wolf with the tiara on its head.

The most surprising discovery was at the entrance of the

Grand Drain. This entrance had been formerly closed by a gate, of which only the hinges now remained. From one of these hinges hung a filthy shapeless rag, which doubtless caught there as it passed, floated in the shadow, and was gradually mouldering away. Bruneseau raised his lantern and examined this fragment; it was of very fine linen, and at one of the corners less gnawn than the rest, could be distinguished an heraldic crown embroidered above these seven letters LAUBESP. The crown was a Marquis's crown, and the seven letters signified *Laubespine*. What they had under their eyes was no less than a piece of Marat's winding-sheet. Marat, in his youth, had had amours, at the time when he was attached to the household of the Comte d'Artois in the capacity of physician to the stables. Of these amours with a great lady, which are historically notorious, this sheet had remained to him as a waif or a souvenir; on his death, as it was the only fine linen at his lodgings, he was buried in it. Old women wrapped up the tragic friend of the people for the tomb in this sheet which had known voluptuousness. Bruneseau passed on; the strip was left where it was. Was it through contempt or respect? Marat deserved both. And then destiny was so impressed on it that a hesitation was felt about touching it. Moreover, things of the sepulchre should be left at the place which they select. Altogether the relic was a strange one; a Marquise had slept in it, Marat had rotted in it; and it had passed through the Pantheon to reach the sewer-rats. This rag from an alcove, every crease in which Watteau would have formerly joyously painted, ended by becoming worthy of the intent glance of Dante.

The visit to the subways of Paris lasted for seven years, from 1805 to 1812. While going along, Bruneseau designed, directed, and carried out considerable operations; in 1808 he lowered the Ponceau drain, and everywhere pushing out new lines, carried the sewer in 1809 under the Rue St Denis to the Fountain of the Innocents; in 1810 under the Rue Froidman-teau and the Salpatrière; in 1811 under the Rue Neuve des Petits Pères, under the Rue du Mail, the Rue de l'Echarpe and the Place Royal; in 1812 under the Rue de la Paix and the Chaussée d'Antin. At the same time he disinfected and cleansed the entire net-work, and in the second year called his son-in-law Nargaud to his assistance. It is thus that at the beginning of this century the old society flushed its subway and performed the toilette of its drain. It was so much cleaned at any rate. Winding, cracked, unpaved, full of pits, broken by strange elbows, ascend-

ing and descending illogically, fetid, savage, ferocious, submerged in darkness, with cicatrices on its stones and scars on its walls, and gruesome,—such was the old drain of Paris, retrospectively regarded. Ramifications in all directions, crossings of trenches, branches, dials and stars as in saps, blind guts and alleys, arches covered with saltpetre, infected pits, scabby exudations on the walls, drops falling from the roof, and darkness ; nothing equalled the horror of this old excremental crypt ; the digestive apparatus of Babylon, a den, a trench, a gulf pierced with streets, a Titanic mole-hill, in which the mind fancies that it sees that old enormous blind mole, the past, crawling in the shadows, amid the ordure which had once been splendour.

Such, we repeat, was the sewer of the olden time.

CHAPTER L.

PRESENT PROGRESS : FUTURE PROGRESS.

AT the present day the sewer is clean, cold, straight, and correct, and almost realizes the ideal of what is understood in England by the word "respectable." It is neat and grey ; built with the plumb-line, we might almost say coquettishly. It resembles a contractor who has become a Councillor of State. You almost see clearly in it, and the mud behaves itself decently. At the first glance you might be inclined to take it for one of those subterranean passages so common formerly, and so useful for the flights of monarchs and princes in the good old times—"when the people loved its kings." The present sewer is a handsome sewer, the pure style prevails there ; the classic rectilinear Alexandrine, which, expelled from poetry, appears to have taken refuge in architecture, seems blended with all the stones of this long, dark, and white vault ; each vomitory is an arcade, and the Rue de Rivoli sets the fashion even in the cloaca. However, if the geometric line be anywhere in its place, it is assuredly so in the stercoreous trench of a great city, where everything must be subordinated to the shortest road. The sewer has at the present day assumed a certain official aspect, and the police reports of which it is sometimes the object, are no longer deficient in respect to it. The words which characterize it in the administrative language are lofty and dignified ; what used to be called a gut is now called a gal-

lery, and what used to be a hole is now a "look." Villon would no longer recognize his old temporary lodgings. This network of cellars still has its population of rodents, pullulating more than ever; from time to time a rat, an old moustache, ventures his head at the window of the drain and examines the Parisians; but even these vermin are growing tame, as they are satisfied with their subterranean palace. The cloaca no longer retains its primitive ferocity, and the rain which sullied the drain of olden times, washes that of the present day. Still do not trust to it too entirely, for miasmas still inhabit it, and it is rather hypocritical than irreproachable. In spite of all the prefecture of police and the Board of Health have done, it exhales a vague suspicious odour, like Tartuffe after confession. Still we must allow that, take it altogether, flushing is a homage which the sewer pays to civilization, and as from this point of view Tartuffe's conscience is a progress upon the stable of Augias, it is certain that the sewer of Paris has been improved. It is more than a progress, it is a transmutation; between the old and the present sewer there is a revolution. Who effected this revolution? the man whom every one forgets and whom we have named—Bruneseau.

Digging the sewerage of Paris was no small task. The last ten centuries have toiled at it without being able to finish, no more than they could finish Paris. The sewer, in fact, receives all the counterstrokes of the growth of Paris. It is in the ground a species of dark polype with a thousand antennæ, which grows below, equally with the city above. Each time that the city forms a street, the sewer stretches out an arm. The old monarchy only constructed twenty-three thousand three hundred metres of drain, and Paris had reached that point on Jan. 1st, 1806. From this period, to which we shall presently revert, the work has been usefully and energetically taken up and continued. Napoleon built—and the figures are curious—four thousand eight hundred and four metres; Charles X., ten thousand eight hundred and thirty-six; Louis Philippe, eighty-nine thousand and twenty; the Republic of 1848, twenty-three thousand three hundred and eighty-one; the present government seventy thousand five hundred; altogether two hundred and twenty-six thousand six hundred metres, or sixty leagues of sewer—the enormous entrails of Paris—an obscure ramification constantly at work, an unknown and immense construction. As we see, the subterranean labyrinth of Paris is, at the present day, more than tenfold what it was at the beginning of the century. It would be difficult to imagine all the perseverance and efforts required to raise this cloaca to the point of relative perfection at which it now is.

It was with great trouble that the old monarchical Provostry, and in the last ten years of the eighteenth century the revolutionary Mayoralty, succeeded in boring the five leagues of drains which existed prior to 1806. All sorts of obstacles impeded this operation ; some peculiar to the nature of the soil, others inherent in the prejudices of the working population of Paris. Paris is built on a stratum strangely rebellious to the pick, the spade, the borer, and human manipulation. Nothing is more difficult to pierce and penetrate than this geological formation on which the marvellous historical formation called Paris is superposed. So soon as labour in any shape ventures into this layer of alluvium, subterranean resistances abound. They are liquid clay, running springs, hard rocks, and that soft and deep mud which the special science calls "mustard." The pick advances laboriously in the calcareous layers alternating with very thin veins of clay and schistose strata incrusted with oyster-shells, which are contemporaries of the Pre-Adamite oceans. At times a stream suddenly bursts into a tunnel just commenced, and inundates the workmen, or a slip of chalk takes place and rushes forward with the fury of a cataract, breaking like glass the largest supporting shores. Very recently at La Villette, when it was found necessary to carry the collecting sewer under the St Martin canal without stopping the navigation or letting off the water, a fissure formed in the bed of the canal, and the water poured into the tunnel deriding the efforts of the draining pumps. It was found necessary to employ a diver to seek for the fissure which was in the mouth of the great basin, and it was only stopped up with great difficulty. Elsewhere, near the Seine, and even at some distance from the river, as, for instance, at Belleville, bottomless sands are found, in which men have been swallowed up. Add asphyxia by miasmas, interment by slips and sudden breaking in of the soil ; add typhus, too, with which the workmen are slowly impregnated. In our days, after having hollowed the gallery of Clichy with a *banquette* to convey the mainwater conduit of the Ourque, a work performed by trenches ten metres in depth ; after having arched the Bièvre from the Boulevard de l'Hopital to the Seine, in the midst of earth-slips and by the help of trenching often through putrid matter, and of shores ; after having, in order to deliver Paris from the torrent-like waters of the Montmartre, and give an outlet to the fluvialine pond of twenty-three acres which stagnated near the Barrière des Martyrs ; after having, we say, constructed the line of sewers from the Barrière Blanche to the Aubervilliers road, in four months, by working day and night at a depth of eleven

metres ; and after having carried out subterraneously a drain in the Rue Barre du Bec without trenching, a thing unknown before, at a depth of six metres—the surveyor Monnot died. After arching three thousand metres of sewer in all parts of the city, from the Rue Traversière Saint Antoine to the Rue de l'Ourcine ; after having, by the Arbalete branch, freed the Censier-Mouffetard square from pluvial inundations ; after having constructed the St George's Drain through liquid sand upon rubble and béton, and after having lowered the formidable pitch of the Notre Dame de St Lazarette branch—the engineer Duleau died. There are no bulletins for such acts of bravery, which are more useful, however, than the brutal butchery of battle-fields.

The sewers of Paris were in 1832 far from being what they are now. Bruneseau gave the impulse, but it required the cholera to determine the vast reconstruction which has taken place since. It is surprising to say, for instance, that in 1821 a portion of the begirding sewer, called the Grand Canal, as at Venice, still stagnated in the open air, in the Rue des Gourdes. It was not till 1823 that the city of Paris found in its pocket the twenty-six thousand six hundred and eighty francs, six centimes, needed to cover in this turpitude. The three absorbing wells of the Combat la Cunette and St Mandè, with their disgorging apparatus, draining wells, and deodorizing branches, merely date from 1836. The intestine canal of Paris has been re-made, and, as we said, augmented more than tenfold during the last quarter of a century. Thirty years ago, at the period of the insurrection of June 5 and 6, it was still in many parts almost the old sewer. A great number of streets, now convex, were at that time broken causeways. There could be frequently seen at the bottom of the water-sheds of streets and squares, large square gratings, whose iron glistened from the constant passage of the crowd, dangerous and slippery for vehicles, and throwing horses down. The official language of the department of the roads and bridges gave these gratings the expressive name of *Cassis*. In 1832 in a number of streets,—Rue de l'Etoile, Rue St Louis, Rue du Temple, Rue Vieille du Temple, Rue Notre Dame de Nazareth, Rue Folie Méricourt, Quai aux Fleurs, Rue du Petit Musc, Rue de Normandie, Rue Pont aux Biches, Rue des Marais, Faubourg St Martin, Rue Notre Dame des Victoires, Faubourg Montmartre, Rue Grange Batelière, at the Champs Elysées, the Rue Jacob, and the Rue de Tournon, the old Gothic cloaca still cynically displayed its throats. They were enormous stone orifices, sometimes surrounded with posts, with a monumental effrontery. Paris in 1806 was much in the same state as regards drains as in May, 1663 ; five thousand

three hundred and twenty-eight toises. After Bruneseau, on Jan. 1, 1832, there were forty thousand three hundred metres. From 1806 to 1831 seven hundred and fifty metres were on the average constructed annually ; since then eight and even ten thousand metres have been made every year in brick-work, with a coating of concrete on a foundation of beton. At two hundred francs the metre, the sixty leagues of drainage in the Paris of to-day represent forty-eight million francs.

In addition to the economic progress to which we alluded at the outset, serious considerations as to the public health are attached to this immense question,—the drainage of Paris. Paris is situated between two sheets, a sheet of water and a sheet of air. The sheet of water, lying at a very great depth, but already tapped by two borings, is supplied by the stratum of green sandstone situated between the chalk and the jurassic lime-stone ; this stratum may be represented by a disc with a radius of twenty-five leagues ; a multitude of rivers and streams drip into it, and the Seine, the Marne, the Yonne, the Oisin, the Aisne, the Cher, the Vienne, and the Loire, are drunk in a glass of water from the Grenelle well. The sheet of water is salubrious, for it comes from the sky first, and then from the earth, but the sheet of air is unhealthy, for it comes from the sewer. All the miasmas of the cloaca are mingled with the breathing of the city—hence this bad breath. The atmosphere taken from above a dung-heap, it has been proved scientifically, is purer than the atmosphere taken from over Paris. Within a given time, by the aid of progress, improvements in machinery, and enlightenment, the sheet of water will be employed to purify the sheet of air, that is to say, to wash the sewer. It is known that by washing the sewer we mean restoring the ordure to the earth by sending dung to the arable lands, and manure to the grass lands. Through this simple fact there will be for the whole social community a diminution of wretchedness, and an augmentation of health. At the present hour the radiation of the diseases of Paris extends for fifty leagues round the Louvre, taken as the axle of this pestilential wheel.

We might say that for the last ten centuries the cloaca has been the misery of Paris, and the sewer is the viciousness which the city has in its blood. The popular instinct has never been deceived, and the trade of the sewer-man was formerly almost as dangerous and almost as repulsive to the people as that of the knacker, which so long was regarded with horror, and left to the hangman. Great wages were required to induce a brick-layer to disappear in this fetid sap ; the ladder of the well-digger hesitated to plunge into it ; it was said proverbially *Going*

into the sewer is entering the tomb, and all sorts of hideous legends, as we said, covered this colossal cesspool with terrors. It is a formidable fosse which bears traces of the revolutions of the globe as well as the revolutions of men, and vestiges may be found there of every cataclysm from the shells of the Deluge to the ragged sheet of Marat.

CHAPTER LI.

THE SEWER AND ITS SURPRISES.

IT was in the sewer of Paris that Jean Valjean found himself. This is a further resemblance of Paris with the sea, as in the ocean the diver can disappear there. It was an extraordinary transition, in the very heart of the city. Jean Valjean had left the city, and in a twinkling, the time required to lift a trap and let it fall again, he had passed from broad daylight to complete darkness, from midday to midnight, from noise to silence, from the uproar of thunder to the stagnation of the tomb, and, by an incident far more prodigious even than that of the Rue Polonceau, from the extremest peril to the most absolute security. A sudden fall into a cellar, disappearance in the oubliette of Paris, leaving this street where death was all around for this species of sepulchre in which was life; it was a strange moment. He stood for some minutes as if stunned, listening and amazed. The trap-door of safety had suddenly opened beneath him, and the heavenly kindness had to some extent snared him by treachery. Admirable ambuscades of Providence! Still the wounded man did not stir, and Jean Valjean did not know whether what he was carrying in this fosse were alive or dead.

His first sensation was blindness, for he all at once could see nothing. He felt too that in a moment he had become deaf, for he could hear nothing more. The frenzied storm of murder maintained a few yards above him only reached him confusedly and indistinctly, and like a rumour in a deep place. He felt that he had something solid under his feet, but that was all; still it was sufficient. He stretched out one arm, then the other; he touched the wall on both sides and understood that the passage was narrow; his foot slipped, and he understood that the pavement was damp. He advanced one foot cautiously, fearing a hole, a cesspool, or some gulf, and

satisfied himself that the pavement went onwards. A fetid gust warned him of the spot where he was. At the expiration of a few minutes he was no longer blind, a little light fell through the trap by which he descended, and his eye grew used to this cellar. He began to distinguish something. The passage in which he had run to earth—no other word expresses the situation better—was walled up behind him; it was one of those blind alleys called in the special language branches. Before him he had another wall, a wall of night. The light of the trap expired ten or twelve feet from the spot where Jean Valjean was, and scarce produced a livid whiteness on a few yards of the damp wall of the sewer. Beyond that the opaqueness was massive, to enter it seemed horrible, and resembled being swallowed up by an earthquake. Yet it was possible to bury oneself in this wall of fog, and it must be done; and must even be done quickly. Jean Valjean thought that the grating which he had noticed in the street might also be noticed by the troops, and that all depended on chance. They might also come down into the well and search, so he had not a minute to lose. He had laid Marius on the ground and now picked him up—that is again the right expression—took him on his shoulders and set out. He resolutely entered the darkness.

The truth is, that they were less saved than Jean Valjean believed; perils of another nature, but equally great, awaited them. After the flashing whirlwind of the combat, came the cavern of miasmas and snares, after the chaos the cloaca. Jean Valjean had passed from one circle of the Inferno into another. When he had gone fifty yards he was obliged to stop, for a question occurred to him; the passage ran into another, which it intersected, and two roads offered themselves. Which should he take? ought he to turn to the left or right? how was he to find his way in this black labyrinth? This labyrinth, we have said, has a clue in its slope, and following the slope leads to the river. Jean Valjean understood this immediately; he said to himself that he was probably in the sewer of the Halles, that if he turned to the left and followed the incline he would arrive in a quarter of an hour at some opening on the Seine between the Pont au Change and the Pont Neuf, that is to say, appear in broad daylight in the busiest part of Paris. Perhaps he might come out at some street opening, and passers-by would be stupefied at seeing two blood-stained men emerge from the ground at their feet. The police would come up and they would be carried off to the nearest guard-room; they would be prisoners before they had come out. It would be

better, therefore, to bury himself in the labyrinth, confide in the darkness, and leave the issue to Providence.

He went up the incline and turned to the right; when he had gone round the corner of the gallery the distant light from the trap disappeared, the curtain of darkness fell on him again, and he became blind once more. For all that he advanced as rapidly as he could; Marius' arms were passed round his neck, and his feet hung down behind. He held the two arms with one hand and felt the wall with the other. Marius' cheek touched his and was glued to it, as it was bloody, and he felt a warm stream which came from Marius drip on him and penetrate his clothing. Still, a warm breath in his ear, which touched the wounded man's mouth, indicated respiration, and consequently life. The passage in which Jean Valjean was now walking was not so narrow as the former, and he advanced with some difficulty. The rain of the previous night had not yet passed off, and formed a small torrent in the centre, and he was forced to hug the wall in order not to lave his feet in the water. He went on thus darkly, resembling beings of the night groping in the invisible, and subterraneously lost in the veins of gloom. Still, by degrees, either that a distant grating sent a little floating light into this opaque mist, or that his eyes grew accustomed to the obscurity, he regained some vague vision, and began to notice confusedly, at one moment the wall he was touching, at another the vault under which he was passing. The pupil is dilated at night, and eventually finds daylight in it, in the same way as the soul is dilated in misfortune and eventually finds God in it.

To direct himself was difficult, for the sewers represent, so to speak, the outline of the streets standing over them. There were in the Paris of that day two thousand two hundred streets, and imagine beneath them that forest of dark branches called the sewer. The system of drains existing at that day, if placed end on end, would have given a length of eleven leagues. We have already said that the present network, owing to the special activity of the last thirty years, is no less than sixty leagues. Jean Valjean began by deceiving himself; he fancied that he was under the Rue St Denis, and it was unlucky that he was not so. There is under that street an old stone drain, dating from Louis XIII., which runs straight to the collecting sewer, called the Great Sewer, with only one turn on the right, by the old Court of Miracles, and a single branch, the Saint Martin sewer, whose four arms cut each other at right angles. But the gut of the little Truanderie, whose entrance was near the Corinth wine-shop, never communicated with the sewer of the Rue St Denis; it falls into

the Montmartre drain, and that is where Jean Valjean now was. There opportunities for losing himself were abundant, for the Montmartre drain is one of the most labyrinthine of the old network. Luckily Jean Valjean had left behind him the drain of the Halles, whose geometrical plan represents a number of intertwined topmasts; but he had before him more than one embarrassing encounter, and more than one street corner—for they are streets—offering itself in the obscurity as a note of interrogation. In the first place on his left, the vast Plâtrière drain, a sort of Chinese puzzle, thrusting forth and intermingling its chaos of T's and Z's under the Post Office, and the rotunda of the Halle au blé, as far as the Seine, where it terminates in a Y; secondly, on his right the curved passage of the Rue du Cadran, with its three teeth, which are so many blind alleys; thirdly, on his left the Mail branch, complicated almost at the entrance by a species of fork, and running with repeated zigzags to the great cesspool of the Louvre, which ramifies in every direction; and lastly, on his right the blind alley of the Rue du Jeûneurs, without counting other pitfalls, ere he reached the surrounding drain which alone could lead him to some issue sufficiently distant to be safe.

Had Jean Valjean had any notion of all we have just stated he would have quickly perceived, merely by feeling the wall, that he was not in the subterranean gallery of the Rue St Denis. Instead of the old carved stone, instead of the old architecture, haughty and royal even in the drain, with its timber supports and running courses of granite, which cost eight hundred livres the toise, he would feel under his hand modern cheapness, the economic expedient, brickwork supported on a layer of beton, which costs two hundred francs the metre, that bourgeois masonry, known as *à petits matériaux*; but he knew nothing of all this. He advanced anxiously, but calmly, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, plunged into chance, that is to say, swallowed up in Providence. By degrees, however, we are bound to state that a certain amount of horror beset him, and the shadow which enveloped him entered his mind. He was walking in an enigma. This aqueduct of the cloaca is formidable, for it intersects itself in a vertiginous manner, and it is a mournful thing to be caught in this Paris of darkness. Jean Valjean was obliged to find, and almost invent, his road without seeing it. In this unknown region each step that he ventured might be his last. How was he to get out of it? would he find an issue? would he find it in time? could he pierce and penetrate this colossal subterranean sponge with its passages of stone? would he meet there some unexpected knot of darkness? would he arrive at

something inextricable and impassable? would Marius die of hemorrhage, and himself of hunger? would they both end by being lost there, and form two skeletons in a corner of this night? He did not know; he asked himself all this and could not find an answer. The intestines of Paris are a precipice, and like the prophet he was in the monster's belly.

He suddenly had a surprise; at the most unexpected moment, and without ceasing to walk in a straight line, he perceived that he was no longer ascending; the water of the gutter plashed against his heels instead of coming to his toes. The sewer was now descending; why? was he about to reach the Seine suddenly? That danger was great, but the peril of turning back was greater still, and he continued to advance. He was not proceeding toward the Seine; the ridge which the soil of Paris makes on the right bank disengages one of its watersheds into the Seine, and the other into the great sewer. The crest of this ridge, which determines the division of the waters, designs a most capricious line; the highest point is in the St Avoise sewer, beyond the Rue Michel-le-comte, in the Louvre sewer, near the boulevards, and in the Montmartre drain, near the Halles. This highest point Jean Valjean had reached, and he was proceeding toward the surrounding sewer, or in the right direction, but he knew it not. Each time that he reached a branch he felt the corners, and if he found the opening narrower than the passage in which he was he did not enter, but continued his march, correctly judging that any narrower way must end in a blind alley, and could only take him from his object, that is to say, an outlet. He thus avoided the fourfold snare laid for him in the darkness by the four labyrinths which we have enumerated. At a certain moment he recognized that he was getting from under that part of Paris petrified by the riot, where the barricades had suppressed circulation, and returning under living and normal Paris. He suddenly heard above his head a sound like thunder, distant but continuous; it was the rolling of vehicles.

He had been walking about half an hour, at least that was . the calculation he made, and had not thought of resting; he had merely changed the hand which held Marius up. The darkness was more profound than ever, but this darkness reassured him. All at once he saw his shadow before him; it stood out upon a faint and almost indistinct redness, which vaguely impurpled the roadway at his feet and the vault above his head, and glided along the greasy walls of the passage. He turned his head in stupefaction, and saw behind him at a distance, which appeared immense, a sort of horrible star glisten-

ing, which seemed to be looking at him. It was the gloomy police star rising in the sewer. Behind this star there moved confusedly nine or ten black, upright, indistinct, and terrible forms.

The meaning was as follows: on the day of June 6th a battue of the sewers was ordered, for it was feared lest the conquered should fly to them as a refuge, and Prefect Gisquet ordered occult Paris to be searched, while General Bugeaud swept public Paris; a double connected operation, which required a double strategy of the public force, represented above by the army and beneath by the police. Three squads of agents and sewer-men explored the subway of Paris, the first the right bank, the second the left bank, and the third the Cité. The agents were armed with carbines, bludgeons, swords, and daggers, and what was at this moment pointed at Jean Valjean was the lantern of the round of the right bank. This round had just inspected the winding gallery and three blind alleys which are under the Rue du Cadran. While the police were carrying their light about there, Jean Valjean in his progress came to the entrance of the gallery, found it narrower than the main gallery, and had not entered it. The police, on coming out of the Cadran gallery, fancied that they could hear the sound of footsteps in the direction of the outer drain, and they were really Jean Valjean's footsteps. The head sergeant of the round raised his lantern, and the squad began peering into the mist in the direction whence the noise had come.

It was an indescribable moment for Jean Valjean; luckily, if he saw the lantern well the lantern saw him badly, for it was the light and he was the darkness. He was too far off, and blended with the blackness of the spot, so he drew himself up against the wall and stopped. However, he did not explain to himself what was moving behind him; want of sleep and food and emotion had made him to pass into a visionary state. He saw a flash, and round this flash, sprites. What was it? he did not understand. When Jean Valjean stopped the noise ceased; the police listened and heard nothing, they looked and saw nothing, and hence consulted together. There was at that period at that point in the Montmartre drain a sort of square called *de service*, which has since been suppressed, owing to the small internal lake which the torrents of rain formed there, and the squad assembled on this square. Jean Valjean saw them make a sort of circle, and then bull-dog heads came together and whispered. The result of this council held by the watch-dogs was that they were mistaken, that there had been no noise, that there was nobody there, that it was useless to enter the surrounding sewer, that it would be time wasted, but that they must hasten to the

St Merry drain, for if there were anything to be done and any "boussingot" to track, it would be there. From time to time parties new-sole their old insults. In 1832, the word *boussingot* formed the transition between the word *jacobin*, no longer current, and the word *demagogue*, at that time almost unused, and which has since done such excellent service. The sergeant gave orders to left-wheel toward the watershed of the Seine. Had they thought of dividing into two squads and going in both directions, Jean Valjean would have been caught. It is probable that the instructions of the Prefecteur, fearing the chance of a fight with a large body of insurgents, forbade the round from dividing. The squad set out again, leaving Jean Valjean behind; and in all this movement he perceived nothing except the eclipse of the lantern, which was suddenly turned away.

Before starting, the sergeant, to satisfy his police conscience, discharged his carbine in the direction where Jean Valjean was. The detonation rolled echoing along the crypt, like the rumbling of these Titanic bowels. A piece of plaster which fell into the gutter and plashed up the water a few yards from Jean Valjean warned him that the bullet had struck the vault above his head. Measured and slow steps echoed for some time along the wooden causeway, growing more and more deadened by the growing distance; the group of black forms disappeared; a light oscillated and floated, forming on the vault a ruddy circle, which decreased and disappeared; the silence again became profound, the obscurity again became complete, and blindness and deafness again took possession of the gloom, and Jean Valjean, not daring yet to stir, remained leaning for a long time against the wall, with outstretched ear and dilated eyeballs, watching the evanishment of the patrol of phantoms.

CHAPTER LII.

THE TRACKED MAN.

We must do the police of that day the justice of saying that even in the gravest public conjunctures, they imperturbably accomplished their duties as watchmen. A riot was not in their eyes a pretext to leave the bridle to malefactors and to neglect society for the reason that the Government was in danger. The ordinary duties were performed correctly in addition to the

extraordinary duties, and were in no way disturbed. In the midst of an incalculable political event, under the pressure of a possible revolution, an agent, not allowing himself to be affected by the insurrection and the barricade, would track a robber. Something very like this occurred on the afternoon of June 6, on the right bank of the Seine, a little beyond the Pont des Invalides. There is no bank there at the present day, and the appearance of the spot has been altered. On this slope two men, a certain distance apart, were observing each other ; the one in front seemed to be trying to get away, while the one behind wanted to catch him up. It was like a game of chess played at a distance and silently ; neither of them seemed to be in a hurry, and both walked slowly, as if they were afraid that increased speed on the part of one would be imitated by the other. It might have been called an appetite following a prey, without appearing to do so purposely ; the prey was crafty, and kept on guard.

The proportions required between the tracked ferret and the tracking dog were observed. The one trying to escape was thin and weak ; the one trying to catch was a tall fellow, and evidently a rough customer. The first, feeling himself the weaker, avoided the second, but did so in a deeply furious way ; any one who could have observed him would have seen in his eyes the gloomy hostility of flight, and all the threat which there is in fear ; the slope was deserted, there were no passers-by, not even a boatman or raftsmen in the boats moored here and there. They could only be noticed easily from the opposite quay, and any one who had watched them at that distance, would have seen that the man in front appeared a bristling, ragged, and shambling fellow, anxious and shivering under a torn blouse, while the other was a classic and official personage, wearing the frock-coat of authority buttoned up to the chin. The reader would probably recognize these two men, were he to see them more closely. What was the object of the last one ? probably he wished to clothe the other man more warmly. When a man dressed by the State pursues a man in rags, it is in order to make of him also a man dressed by the State. The difference of colour is the sole question,—to be dressed in blue is glorious, to be dressed in red is disagreeable, for there is a purple of the lower classes. It was probably some disagreeable thing, and some purple of this sort, which the first man desired to avoid.

If the other allowed him to go on ahead, and did not yet arrest him, it was, in all appearance, in the hope of seeing him arrive at some significative rendezvous and some group worth

capturing. This delicate operation is called tracking. What renders this conjecture highly probable, is the fact that the buttoned-up man perceiving from the slope an empty fiacre passing, made a sign to the driver; the driver understood, evidently perceived with whom he had to deal, turned round, and began following the two men along the quay. This was not perceived by the ragged, shambling fellow in front. The hackney coach rolled along under the trees of the Champs Elysées, and over the parapet could be seen the bust of the driver, whip in hand. One of the secret instructions of the police to the agents is "always have a hackney coach at hand in case of need." While each of these men manœuvred with irreproachable strategy, they approached an incline in the quay, which allowed drivers coming from Passy to water their horses in the river. This incline has since been suppressed for the sake of symmetry,—horses die of thirst, but the eye is flattered. It was probable that the man in the blouse would ascend by this incline in order to try and escape in the Champs Elysées, a place adorned with trees, but, to make up for that, much frequented by police agents, where the other could easily procure assistance. This point of the quay is a very little distance from the house brought from Moret to Paris in 1824, by Colonel Brack, and called the house of Francis I. A piquet is always stationed there. To the great surprise of his watcher, the tracked man did not turn up the road to the watering-place, but continued to advance along the bank parallel with the quay. His position was evidently becoming critical, for unless he threw himself into the Seine, what could he do?

There were no means now left him of returning to the quay, no incline or no steps, and they were close to the spot marked by the turn in the Seine, near the Pont de Jena, where the bank, gradually contracting, ended in a narrow strip, and was lost in the water. There he must inevitably find himself blockaded between the tall wall on his right, the river on his left and facing him, and authority at his heels. It is true that this termination of the bank was masked from sight by a pile of rubbish seven feet high, the result of some demolition. But did this man hope to conceal himself profitably behind this heap? the expedient would have been puerile. He evidently did not dream of that, for the innocence of robbers does not go so far. The pile of rubbish formed on the water-side a sort of eminence extending in a promontory to the quay wall; the pursued man reached this small mound and went round it, so that he was no longer seen by the other. The latter, not seeing, was not seen, and he took advantage of this to give up

all dissimulation and walk very fast. In a few minutes he reached the heap and turned it, but there stood stupefied. The man he was pursuing was not there, it was a total eclipse of the man in the blouse. The bank did not run more than thirty yards beyond the heap, and then plunged under the water which washed the quay wall. The fugitive could not have thrown himself into the Seine, or have climbed up the quay wall, without being seen by his pursuer. What had become of him?

The man in the buttoned-up coat walked to the end of the bank and stood there for a moment, thoughtfully, with clenched fists and scowling eye. All at once he smote his forehead; he had just perceived, at the point where the ground ended and the water began, a wide, low, arched, iron grating, provided with a heavy lock, and three massive hinges. This grating, a sort of gate pierced at the bottom of the quay, opened on the river as much as on the bank, and a black stream poured from under it into the Seine. Beyond the heavy rusty bars could be distinguished a sort of arched and dark passage. The man folded his arms and looked at the grating reproachfully, and this look not being sufficient, he tried to push it open, he shook it, but it offered a sturdy resistance. It was probable that it had just been opened, although no sound had been heard, a singular thing with so rusty a gate, but it was certain that it had been closed again. This indicated that the man who had opened the gate had not a pick-lock but a key. This evidence at once burst on the mind of the man who was trying to open the grating, and drew from him this indignant apostrophe,—

“ That is strong! a government key ! ”

Then, calming himself immediately, he expressed a whole internal world of ideas by this outburst of monosyllables, marked by an almost ironical accent,—

“ Stay, stay, stay, stay.”

This said, hoping we know not what, either to see the man come out or others enter, he posted himself on the watch behind the heap of rubbish, with the patient rage of a yard-mastiff. On its side, the hackney coach which regulated itself by all his movements, stopped above him near the parapet. The driver, foreseeing a long halt, put on his horses the nose bag full of damp oats so well known to the Parisians upon whom the Government, we may remark parenthetically, places it sometimes. The few passers over the Pont de Jena, before going on, turned their heads to look for a moment at these motionless objects,—the man on the bank and the hackney coach on the quay.

CHAPTER LIII.

HE TOO BEARS HIS CROSS.

JEAN VALJEAN had resumed his march, and had not stopped again. This march grew more and more laborious ; for the level of these passages varies ; the average height is about five feet six inches, and was calculated for a man's stature. Jean Valjean was compelled to stoop so as not to dash Marius against the roof, and was forced at each moment to bend down, then draw himself up and incessantly feel the wall. The dampness of the stones and of the flooring rendered them bad supports, either for the hand or the foot, and he tottered in the hideous dungheap of the city. The intermittent flashes of the street gratings only appeared at lengthened intervals, and were so faint that the bright sunshine seemed to be moonlight ; all the rest was fog, miasma, opaqueness, and blackness. Jean Valjean was hungry and thirsty, the latter most, and it was like the sea, there was water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink. His strength, which, as we know, was prodigious, and but slightly diminished by age, owing to his chaste and sober life, was, however, beginning to give way ; fatigue assailed him, and his decreasing strength increased the weight of his burden. Marius, who was perhaps dead, was heavy, like all inert bodies, but Jean Valjean held him so that his chest was not affected, and he could breathe with pressure. He felt between his legs the rapid gliding of rats, and one was so startled as to bite him. From time to time a gush of fresh air came through the gratings, which revived him.

It might be about three p. m. when he reached the external sewer, and was at first amazed by the sudden widening. He unexpectedly found himself in a gallery whose two walls his outstretched arms did not reach, and under an arch which his head did not touch. The grand sewer, in fact, is eight feet in width by seven high. At the point where the Montmartre drain joins the grand sewer two other subterranean galleries, that of the Rue de Provence and that of the Abattoir, form cross roads. Between these four ways a less sagacious man would have been undecided, but Jean Valjean selected the widest, that is to say, the encircling sewer. But here the question came back again,—Should he ascend or descend ? He

thought that the situation was pressing, and that he must at all risks now reach the Seine, in other words, descend, so he turned to the left. It was fortunate that he did so, for it would be an error to suppose that the encircling sewer has two issues, one toward Bercy, the other toward Passy, and that it is, as its name indicates, the subterranean belt of Paris on the right bank. The grand sewer, which is nought else, it must be borne in mind, than the old Menilmontant stream, leads, if you ascend it, to a blind alley, that is to say, to its old starting-point, a spring at the foot of the Menilmontant mound. It has no direct communication with the branch which collects the waters of Paris after leaving the Popincourt quarter, and which falls into the Seine by the Amelot sewer above the old isle of Louviers. This branch, which completes the collecting sewer, is separated from it under the Rue Menilmontant by masonry-work, which marks where the waters divide to run up-stream and down-stream. If Jean Valjean had remounted the gallery he would have arrived, exhausted by fatigue and dying, at a wall ; he would have been lost.

Strictly speaking, by going back a little way, entering the passage of les Filles du Calvaire, on condition that he did not hesitate at the subterranean dial of the Boucherat cross-roads, by taking the St Louis passage, then on the left the St Gilles trench, then by turning to the right and avoiding the St Sebastian gallery, he might have reached the Amelot sewer, and then if he did not lose his way in the species of F which is under the Bastille, he would have reached the issue on the Seine near the Arsenal. But for that he must have thoroughly known, in all its ramifications and piercings, the enormous madrepore of the sewer. Now we dwell on the fact that he knew nothing of this frightful labyrinth in which he was marching, and had he been asked where he was he would have replied,—In night. His instinct served him well ; going down, in fact, was the only salvation possible. He left on his right the two passages which ramify in the shape of a claw under the Rues Laffitte and St Georges, and the long bifurcate corridor of the Chaussée d'Antin. A little beyond an affluent, which was probably the Madeleine branch, he stopped, for he was very weary. A large grating, probably the one in the Rue d'Anjou, produced an almost bright light. Jean Valjean, with the gentle movements which a brother would bestow on a wounded brother, laid Marius on the *banquette* of the drain, and his white face gleamed under the white light of the trap as from the bottom of a tomb. His eyes were closed, his hair was attached to his forehead like pincers dried in blood, his hands were hanging

and dead, his limbs cold, and blood was clotted at the corner of his lips. Coagulated blood had collected in his cravat knot, his shirt entered the wounds, and the cloth of his coat rubbed the gaping edges of the quivering flesh. Jean Valjean, removing the clothes with the tips of his fingers, laid his hand on his chest,—the heart still beat. Jean Valjean tore up his shirt, bandaged the wounds as well as he could, and stopped the blood that was flowing; then, stooping down in this half daylight over Marius, who was still unconscious and almost breathless, he looked at him with indescribable hatred. In moving Marius' clothes he had found in his pockets two things, the loaf, which he had forgotten the previous evening, and his pocket-book. He ate the bread and opened the pocket-book. On the first page he read the lines written by Marius, as will be remembered,—

“ My name is Marius Pontmercy, carry my body to my grandfather's, M. Gillenormand, No. 6, Rue des Filles du Calvaire, in the Marais.”

Jean Valjean read by the light of the grating these lines, and remained for a time as it were absorbed in himself, and repeating in a low voice, M. Gillenormand, No. 6, Rue des Filles du Calvaire. He returned the portfolio to Marius' pocket; he had eaten, and his strength had come back to him. He raised Marius again, carefully laid his head on his right shoulder, and began descending the sewer. The grand sewer, running along the thalweg of the valley of Menilmontant, is nearly two leagues in length, and is paved for a considerable portion of the distance. This nominal torch of the streets of Paris, with which we enlighten for the reader Jean Valjean's subterranean march, he did not possess. Nothing informed him what zone of the city he was traversing, nor what distance he had gone, still the growing paleness of the flakes of light which he met from time to time indicated to him that the sun was retiring from the pavement, and that day would be soon ended, and the rolling of vehicles over his head, which had become intermittent instead of continuous, and then almost ceased, proved to him that he was no longer under central Paris, and was approaching some solitary region, near the external boulevards or most distant quays, where there are fewer houses and streets, and the drain has fewer gratings. The obscurity thickened around Jean Valjean; still he continued to advance, groping his way in the shadow.

This shadow suddenly became terrible.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE FONTIS.

HE felt that he was entering water, and that he had under his feet no longer stone but mud. It often happens on certain coasts of Brittany or Scotland that a man, whether traveller or fisherman, walking at low water on the sands some distance from the coast suddenly perceives that during the last few minutes he has found some difficulty in walking. The shore beneath his feet is like pitch, his heels are attached to it, it is no longer sand but bird-lime; the sand is perfectly dry, but at every step taken, so soon as the foot is raised the imprint it leaves fills with water. The eye, however, has perceived no change, the immense expanse is smooth and calm, all the sand seems alike, nothing distinguishes the soil which is solid from that which is no longer so, and the little merry swarm of water-fleas continue to leap tumultuously round the feet of the way-farer. The man follows his road, turns toward the land, and tries to approach the coast, not that he is alarmed; alarmed at what? Still he feels as if the heaviness of his feet increased at every step that he takes; all at once he sinks in, sinks in two or three inches. He is decidedly not on the right road, and stops to look about him. Suddenly he looks at his feet, but they have disappeared, the sand covers them. He draws his feet out of the sand and tries to turn back, but he sinks in deeper still. The sand comes up to his ankle, he pulls it out and turns to his left, when the sand comes to his knee, he turns to the right, and the sand comes up to his thigh, then he recognizes with indescribable terror that he is caught in a quicksand, and has under him the frightful medium in which a man can no more walk than a fish can swim. He throws away his load, if he have one, and lightens himself like a ship in distress; but it is too late, for the sand is already above his knees. He calls out, waves his hat or handkerchief, but the sand gains on him more and more. If the shore is deserted, if land is too distant, if the quicksand is too ill-famed, if there is no hero in the vicinity, it is all over with him, and he is compelled to be swallowed up. He is condemned to that long, awful, implacable interment, impossible to delay or hasten, which lasts hours, which never ends, which seizes you when erect, free, and in perfect health, which drags you

by the feet, which, at every effort you attempt, every cry you utter, drags you a little deeper ; which seems to punish you for your resistance by a redoubled clutch, which makes a man slowly enter the ground while allowing him ample time to regard the houses, the trees, the green fields, the smoke from the villages on the plain, the sails of the vessels on the sea, the birds that fly and sing, the sun, and the sky. A quicksand is a sepulchre that converts itself into a tide, and ascends from the bottom of the earth toward a living man. Each minute is an inexorable sexton. The wretch tries to sit, to lie down, to walk, to crawl ; all the movements that he makes bury him ; he draws himself up, and only sinks deeper ; he feels himself being swallowed up ; he yells, implores, cries to the clouds, writhes his arms, and grows desperate. Then he is in the sand up to his waist ; the sand reaches his chest, he is but a bust. He raises his hands, utters furious groans, digs his nails into the sand, tries to hold by a pebble, raises himself on his elbows to tear up a weak sea-weed, and sobs frenziedly ; but the sand mounts. It reaches his shoulders, it reaches his neck, the face alone is visible now. The mouth cries, and the sand fills it, and then there is a silence. The eyes still look, but the sand closes them, and there is night. Then the forehead sinks, and a little hair waves above the sand ; a hand emerges, digs up the sand, is waved, and disappears. It is a sinister effacement of a man. At times the rider is swallowed up with his horse, at times the carter with his cart ; it is a shipwreck otherwhere than in the water, it is the land drowning man. The land penetrated by the ocean becomes a snare, it offers itself as a plain, and opens like a wave. The abyss has its acts of treachery.

Such a mournful adventure, always possible on some seashore, was also possible some thirty years ago in the sewer of Paris. Before the important works began in 1833 the subway of Paris was subject to sudden breakings-in. The water filtered through a subjacent and peculiarly friable soil ; and the roadway, if made of paving-stones, as in the old drains, or of concrete upon beton, as in the new galleries, having no support, bent. A bend in a planking of this nature is a crevice, and a crevice is a bursting in. The roadway broke away for a certain length, and such a gap, a gulf of mud, was called in the special language *fontis*. What is a *fontis* ? it is the quicksand of the seashore suddenly met with under-ground ; it is the quicksand of St Michel in a sewer. The moistened soil is in a state of fusion, all its particles are held in suspense in a shifting medium ; it is not land and it is not water. The depth is at times very great. Nothing can be more formidable than meeting with such a

thing; if water predominate death is quick, for a man is drowned; if earth predominate, death is slow, for he is sucked down.

Can our readers imagine such a death? if it be frightful to sink in a quicksand on the sea-shore, what is it in a cloaca? instead of fresh air, daylight, a clear horizon, vast sounds, the free clouds from which life rains, the barque perceived in the distance, that hope under every form, of possible passers-by, of possible help up to the last minute,—instead of all this, deafness, blindness, a black archway, the interior of a tomb already made, death in the mud under a tombstone! slow asphyxia by uncleanness, a sarcophagus where asphyxia opens its claws in the filth, and clutches you by the throat; fetidness mingled with the death-rattle, mud instead of the sand, sulphuretted hydrogen in lieu of the hurricane, ordure instead of the ocean! and to call and gnash the teeth, and writhe and struggle and expire, with this enormous city which knows nothing of it above one's head.

Inexpressible the horror of dying thus! death sometimes expiates its atrocity by a certain terrible dignity. On the pyre, in shipwreck, a man may be great; in the flames, as in the foam, a superb attitude is possible, and a man transfigures himself. But in this case it is not so; for the death is unclean. It is humiliating to expire in such a way, and the last floating visions are abject. Mud is the synonym of shame, and is little, ugly, and infamous. To die in a butt of Malmsey like Clarence,—very well; but in a sewer like Escoubleau is horrible. To struggle in it is hideous, for at the same time as a man is dying, he is wallowing. There is enough darkness for it to be Hell, and enough mud for it to be merely a slough, and the dying man does not know whether he is about to become a spectre or a frog. Everywhere else the sepulchre is sinister, but here it is deformed.

The depth of the fontis varied, as did their length and density, according to the nature of the sub-soil. At times a fontis was three or four feet deep, at times eight or ten, and sometimes it was bottomless. In one the mud was almost solid, in another nearly liquid. In the Lunière fontis, a man would have taken a day in disappearing, while he would have been devoured in five minutes by the Phélieux slough. The mud bears more or less well according to its degree of density, and a lad escapes where a man is lost. The first law of safety is to throw away every sort of loading, and every sewer-man who felt the ground giving way under him began by getting rid of his basket of tools. The fontis had various causes, friability of soil, some convulsion beyond man's depth, violent summer

showers, the incessant winter rain, and long fine rains. At times the weight of the surrounding houses upon a marshy or sandy soil broke the roofs of the subterranean galleries and made them shrink, or else it happened that the road-way broke and slit up under the terrific pressure. The pile of the Pantheon destroyed in this way about a century ago a portion of the cellars in the Montagne Ste Geneviève. When a sewer gave way under the weight of the houses, the disorder was expressed above in the street by a sort of saw-toothed parting between the paving-stones. This rent was developed in a serpentine line, along the whole length of the injured drain, and in such a case, the evil being visible, the remedy might be prompt. It often happened also that the internal ravage was not revealed by any scar outside, and in that case, woe to the sewer-men. Entering the injured drain inadvertently, they might be lost in it. The old registers mention several nightmen buried in this manner in the fontis. They mention several names, among others that of the sewer-man swallowed up in a slough under the opening on the Rue Carême-Prenant, of the name of Blaise Poutrain ; this Blaise was brother of Nicholas Poutrain, who was the last sexton of the cemetery called the Charnier des Innocents in 1785, when that cemetery expired. There was also the young and charming Vicomte d'Escoubleau, to whom we have alluded, one of the heroes of the siege of Lerida, where the assault was made in silk stockings and with violins at their head. L'Escoubleau, surprised one night with his cousin, the Duchesse de Sourdis, drowned himself in a cesspool of the Beaufreillis drain, where he had taken refuge to escape the Duc. Madame de Sourdis, when informed of this death, asked for her smelling-bottle, and forgot to weep through inhaling her salts. In such a case, there is no love that holds out, the cloaca extinguishes it. Hero refuses to wash the corpse of Leander, and Thisbe stops her nose in the presence of Pyramus, saying, Pouah !

Jean Valjean found himself in presence of a fontis : this sort of breaking in was frequent at that day in the subsoil of the Champs Elysées, which was difficult to manage, and most injurious to under-ground drains owing to its extreme fluidity. This fluidity exceeds even the inconsistency of the sands of St George's district, which could only be overcome by laying rubble on beton, and of the gas-infected clay strata in the Quartier des Martyrs, which are so liquid that a passage could only be effected under the Galerie des Martyrs by means of an iron tube. When in 1836 the authorities demolished and rebuilt under the Faubourg St Honoré the old stone drain in which Jean Valjean is now engaged, the shifting sand which is the

subsoil of the Champs Elysées as far as the Seine offered such an obstacle that the operation lasted six months, to the great annoyance of those living on the water-side, especially such as had mansions and coaches. The works were more than difficult, they were dangerous, but we must allow that it rained for four and a half months, and the Seine overflowed thrice. The fontis which Jean Valjean came across was occasioned by the shower of the previous evening. A giving way of the pavement, which was badly supported by the subjacent sand, had produced a deposit of rain water, and when the filtering had taken place the ground broke in, and the road-way, being dislocated, fell into the mud. How far? it was impossible to say, for the darkness was denser there than anywhere else; it was a slough of mud in a cavern of night. Jean Valjean felt the pavement depart from under him as he entered the slough; there was water at top and mud underneath. He must pass it, for it was impossible to turn back; Marius was dying, and Jean Valjean worn out. Where else could he go? Jean Valjean advanced; the slough appeared but of slight depth at the first few steps, but as he advanced his legs sank in. He soon had mud up to the middle of the leg, and water up to the middle of the knee. He walked along, raising Marius with both arms as high as he could above the surface of the water; the mud now came up to his knees and the water to his waist. He could no longer draw back, and he sank in deeper and deeper. This mud, dense enough for the weight of one man, could not evidently bear two; Marius and Jean Valjean might have had a chance of getting out separately, but, for all that, Jean Valjean continued to advance, bearing the dying man, who was perhaps a corpse. The water came up to his arm-pits, and he felt himself drowning; he could scarce move in the depth of mud in which he was standing, for the density which was the support was also the obstacle. He still kept Marius up, and advanced with an extraordinary expenditure of strength, but he was sinking. He had only his head out of water and his two arms sustaining Marius. In the old paintings of the Deluge there is a mother holding her child in the same way. As he still sank he threw back his face to escape the water and be able to breathe; any one who saw him in this darkness would have fancied he saw a mask floating on the gloomy waters; he vaguely perceived above him Marius' hanging head and livid face; he made a desperate effort, and advanced his foot, which struck against something solid, a resting-place. It was high time.

He drew himself up, and writhed and rooted himself with

a species of fury upon this support. It produced on him the effect of the first step of a staircase re-ascending to life. This support, met with in the mud, at the supreme moment, was the beginning of the other side of the roadway, which had fallen in without breaking, and bent under the water like a plank in a single piece. A well-constructed pavement forms a curve, and possesses such firmness. This fragment of roadway, partly submerged, but solid, was a real incline, and once upon it they were saved. Jean Valjean ascended it, and attained the other side of the slough. On leaving the water his foot caught against a stone and he fell on his knees. He found that this was just, and remained on them for some time, with his soul absorbed in words addressed to God. He rose, shivering, chilled, bent beneath the dying man he carried, dripping with filth, but with his soul full of strange brightness.

CHAPTER LV.

THE TORN COAT-SKIRT.

HE set out once again, still, if he had not left his life in the fontis, he seemed to have left his strength there. This supreme effort had exhausted him, and his fatigue was now so great that he was obliged to rest every three or four paces, to take breath, and leant against the wall. Once he was obliged to sit down on the banquette in order to alter Marius' position, and believed that he should remain there. But if his vigour were dead his energy was not so, and he rose again. He walked desperately, almost quickly, went thus one hundred yards without raising his head, almost without breathing, and all at once ran against the wall. He had reached an elbow of the drain, and on arriving head down at the turning came against the wall. He raised his eyes, and at the end of the passage down there, far, very far away, perceived a light. But this time it was no terrible light, but white, fair light. It was daylight. Jean Valjean saw the outlet. A condemned soul that suddenly saw from the middle of the furnace the issue from Gehenna would feel what Jean Valjean felt. It would fly wildly with the stumps of its burnt wings toward the radiant gate. Jean Valjean no longer felt fatigue, he no longer felt Marius' weight, he found again his muscles of steel, and

ran rather than walked. As he drew nearer, the outlet became more distinctly designed ; it was an arch, not so tall as the roof, which gradually contracted, and not so wide as the gallery, which grew narrower at the same time as the roof became lowered. The tunnel finished inside in the shape of a funnel, a faulty reduction, imitated from the wickets of houses of correction, logical in a prison, but illogical in a drain, and which has since been corrected.

Jean Valjean reached the issue and then stopped ; it was certainly the outlet, but they could not get out. The arch was closed by a strong grating, and this grating, which apparently rarely turned on its oxydized hinges, was fastened to the stone wall by a heavy lock, which, red with rust, seemed an enormous brick. The key-hole was visible, as well as the bolt deeply plunged into its iron box. It was one of those Bastille locks of which ancient Paris was so prodigal. Beyond the grating were the open air, the river, daylight, the bank, very narrow, but sufficient to depart, the distant quays, Paris, that gulf in which a man hides himself so easily, the wide horizon, and liberty. On the right could be distinguished, down the river, the Pont de Jena, and up it the Pont des Invalides ; the spot would have been a favourable one to await night and escape. It was one of the most solitary points in Paris, the bank facing the Gros-Caillou. The flies went in and out through the grating bars. It might be about half-past eight in the evening, and day was drawing in : Jean Valjean laid Marius along the wall on the dry part of the way, then walked up to the grating and seized the bars with both hands ; the shock was frenzied, but the effect *nil*. The grating did not stir. Jean Valjean seized the bars one after the other, hoping he might be able to break out the least substantial one, and employ it as a lever to lift the gate off the hinges or break the lock, but not a bar stirred. A tiger's teeth are not more solidly set in their jaws. Without a lever it was impossible to open the grating, and the obstacle was invincible.

Must he finish, then, there ? what should he do ? what would become of him ? he had not the strength to turn back and recommence the frightful journey which he had already made. Moreover, how was he to cross again that slough from which he had only escaped by a miracle ? And after the slough, was there not the police squad, which he assuredly would not escape twice ; and then where should he go, and what direction take ? following the slope would not lead to his object, for if he reached another outlet, he would find it obstructed by an iron plate or a grating. All the issues were indubitably closed in

that way ; accident had left the grating by which they entered open, but it was plain that all the other mouths of the sewer were closed. They had only succeeded in escaping into a prison.

It was all over, and all that Jean Valjean had done was useless : GOD opposed it. They were both caught in the dark and immense web of death, and Jean Valjean felt the fearful spider already running along the black threads in the darkness. He turned his back to the grating and fell on the pavement near Marius, who was still motionless, and whose head had fallen between his knees. There was no outlet, that was the last drop of agony. Of whom did he think in this profound despondency ? Neither of himself nor of Marius ! of Cosette. In the midst of his annihilation a hand was laid on his shoulder, and a low voice said,—

“ Half shares.”

Some one in this shadow ? As nothing so resembles a dream as despair, Jean Valjean fancied that he was dreaming. He had not heard a footstep. Was it possible ? He raised his eyes, and a man was standing before him. This man was dressed in a blouse, his feet were naked, and he held his shoes in his hand ; he had evidently taken them off in order to be able to reach Jean Valjean without letting his footsteps be heard. Jean Valjean had not a moment’s hesitation : however unexpected the meeting might be, the man was known to him : it was Thénardier. Although, so to speak, aroused with a start, Jean Valjean, accustomed to alarms and to unexpected blows, which it is necessary to parry quickly, at once regained possession of all his presence of mind. Besides, the situation could not be worse, a certain degree of distress is not capable of any crescendo, and Thénardier himself could not add any blackness to this night. There was a moment’s expectation. Thénardier, raising his right hand to the level of his forehead, made a screen of it ; then he drew his eyebrows together with a wink, which, with a slight pinching of the lips, characterizes the sagacious attention of a man who is striving to recognize another. He did not succeed. Jean Valjean, as we said, was turning his back to the light, and was besides so disfigured, so filthy, and blood-stained that he could not have been recognized in broad daylight. On the other hand, Thénardier, with his face lit up by the light from the grating, a cellar brightness, it is true, livid but precise in his lividness, leapt at once into Jean Valjean’s eyes, to employ the energetic popular metaphor. This inequality of conditions sufficed to insure some advantage to Jean Valjean in the mysterious duel which was about to begin

between the two situations and the two men. The meeting took place between Jean Valjean masked and Thénardier unmasked. Jean Valjean at once perceived that Thénardier did not recognize him; and they looked at each other silently in this gloom, as if taking one another's measure. Thénardier was the first to break the silence.

"How do you mean to get out?"

Jean Valjean not replying, Thénardier continued,—

"It is impossible to pick the lock: and yet you must get out of here."

"That is true," said Jean Valjean.

"Well, then, half shares."

"What do you mean?"

"You have killed the man, very good, and I have the key."

Thénardier pointed to Marius, and continued,—"I do not know you, but you must be a friend, and I wish to help you."

Jean Valjean began to understand. Thénardier took him for an assassin. The latter continued,—

"Listen, mate, you did not kill this man without looking to see what he had in his pockets. Give me my half and I open the gate."

And half drawing a heavy key from under his ragged blouse, he added,—

"Would you like to see how the key is made? look here."

Jean Valjean was so astounded that he doubted whether what he saw was real. It was Providence appearing in a horrible form, and the good angel issuing from the ground in the shape of Thénardier. The latter thrust his hand into a wide pocket hidden under his blouse, drew out a rope, and handed it to Jean Valjean.

"There," he said, "I give you the rope into the bargain."

"What am I to do with the rope?"

"You also want a stone, but you will find that outside, as there is a heap of them."

"What am I to do with a stone?"

"Why, you ass, as you are going to throw the cove into the river you want a rope and a stone, or else the body will float on the water."

Jean Valjean took the rope mechanically, and Thénardier snapped his fingers as if a sudden idea had occurred to him.

"Hilloh, mate, how did you manage to get through that slough? I did not dare venture into it. Peuh! you do not smell pleasant."

After a pause he added,—

"I ask you questions, but you are right not to answer: it

is an apprenticeship for the magistrate's ugly quarter of an hour. And then, by not speaking at all a man runs no risk of speaking too loud. No matter, though I cannot see your face and do not know your name, you would do wrong in supposing that I do not know who you are and what you want. I know all about it: you have smashed that swell a little, and now want to get rid of him somewhere. You prefer the river, that great nonsense-hider, and I will help you out of the hobble. It is my delight to aid a good fellow when in trouble."

While commanding Jean Valjean for his silence it was plain that he was trying to make him speak. He pushed his shoulder, so as to be able to see his profile, and exclaimed, though without raising the pitch of his voice,—

"Talking of the slough, you are a precious ass. Why did you not throw the man into it?"

Jean Valjean preserved silence. Thénardier continued, raising his rag of a cravat to the Adam's apple, a gesture which completes the capable air of a serious man.

"Really, you may have acted sensibly, for the workmen who went to-morrow to stop up the hole would certainly have found the swell, and your trail would be followed up. Some one has passed through the sewer; who? how did he get out? was he seen to do so? The police are full of sense: the drain is a traitor, and denounces you. Such a find is a rarity, it attracts attention, for few people employ the sewer for their little business, while the river belongs to everybody, and is the real grave. At the end of a month your man is fished up at the nets of St Cloud: well, who troubles himself about that? it's cold meat, that's all. Who killed the man? Paris, and justice makes no inquiries. You acted wisely."

The more loquacious Thénardier became, the more silent Jean Valjean was. Thénardier shook his shoulder again.

"And now let's settle our business. You have seen my key, so show me your money."

Thénardier was haggard, firm, slightly menacing, but remarkably friendly. There was one strange fact: Thénardier's manner was not simple; he did not appear entirely at his ease: while not affecting any mysterious air, he spoke in a low voice. From time to time he laid his finger on his lip, and muttered "Chut!" it was difficult to guess why, for there were only themselves present. Jean Valjean thought that other bandits were probably hidden in some corner no great distance off, and that Thénardier was not anxious to share with them. The latter continued,—

"Now for a finish. How much had the swell about him?"

Jean Valjean felt in his pockets. It was, as will be remembered, always his rule to have money about him, for the gloomy life of expedients to which he was condemned rendered it a law for him. This time, however, he was unprovided. In putting on upon the previous evening his National Guard uniform, he forgot, mournfully absorbed as he was, to take out his pocket-book, and he had only some change in his waistcoat-pocket. He turned out his pocket, which was saturated with slime, and laid on the banquette a louis d'or, two five-franc pieces, and five or six double sous. Thénardier thrust out his lower lip with a significant twist of the neck.

"You did not kill him for much," he said.

He began most familiarly feeling in Jean Valjean and Marius' pockets, and Jean Valjean, who was most anxious to keep his back to the light, allowed him to do so. While feeling in Marius' coat, Thénardier, with the dexterity of a conjuror, managed to tear off, without Jean Valjean perceiving the fact, a strip, which he concealed under his blouse; probably thinking that this piece of cloth might help him to recognize hereafter the assassinated man and the assassin. However, he found no more than the thirty francs.

"It is true," he said; "one with the other, you have no more than that."

And forgetting his phrase half-shares, he took all. He hesitated a little at the double sous, but on reflection he took them too, while grumbling, "I don't care, it is killing people too cheaply."

This done, he again took the key from under his blouse.

"Now, my friend, you must be off. It is here as at the fairs; you pay when you go out. You have paid, so you can go."

And he began laughing. We may be permitted to doubt whether he had the pure and disinterested intention of saving an assassin, when he gave a stranger the help of this key, and allowed any one but himself to pass through this gate. Thénardier helped Jean Valjean to replace Marius on his back, and then proceeded to the grating on the tips of his naked feet. After making Jean Valjean a sign to follow him, he placed his finger on his lip, and remained for some seconds as if in suspense; but when the inspection was over he put the key in the lock. The bolt slid, and the gate turned on its hinges without either grinding or creaking. It was plain that this grating and these hinges, carefully oiled, opened more frequently than might be supposed. This gentleness was ill-omened; it spoke of furtive comings and goings, of the mysterious entrances and exits of

night-men, and the crafty footfall of crime. The sewer was evidently an accomplice of some dark band, and this taciturn grating was a receiver. Thénardier held the door ajar, left just room for Jean Valjean to pass, relocked the gate, and plunged back into the darkness, making no more noise than a breath; he seemed to walk with the velvety pads of a tiger. A moment later this hideous providence had disappeared, and Jean Valjean was outside.

CHAPTER LVI.

MARIUS APPEARS DEAD TO A CONNOISSEUR.

HE let Marius slip down on to the bank. They were outside; the miasmas, the darkness, the horror, were behind him; the healthy, pure, living, joyous, freely respirable air inundated him. All around him was silence, but it was the charming silence of the sun setting in the full azure. Twilight was passing, and night, the great liberator, the friend of all those who need a cloak of darkness to escape from an agony, was at hand. The sky offered itself on all sides like an enormous calm, and the river rippled up to his feet with the sound of a kiss. The aerial dialogue of the nests bidding each other good-night in the elms of the Champs Elysées was audible. A few stars, faintly studing the pale blue of the zenith, formed in the immensity little imperceptible flashes. Night unfolded over Jean Valjean's head all the sweetness of infinitude. It was the undecided and exquisite hour which says neither yes nor no. There was already sufficient night for a man to lose himself in it a short distance off, and yet sufficient daylight to recognize any one close by. Jean Valjean was for a few seconds irresistibly overcome by all this august and caressing serenity. There are minutes of oblivion in which suffering gives up harassing the wretch; all is eclipsed in the thought; peace covers the dreamer like a light, and under the gleaming twilight the soul shines in imitation of the sky which is becoming illumined. Jean Valjean could not refrain from contemplating the vast clear obscure which he had above him, and pensively took a bath of ecstasy and prayer in the majestic silence of the eternal heavens. Then, as if the feeling of duty returned to him, he eagerly bent down over Marius, and lifting some water in the hollow of his hand, softly threw

a few drops into his face. Marius' eyelids did not move, but he still breathed through his parted lips. Jean Valjean was again about to plunge his hand into the river, when he suddenly felt some annoyance, as when we feel there is some one behind us though we cannot see him. He turned round, and there was really some one behind him, as there had been just before.

A man of tall stature, dressed in a long coat, with folded arms, and carrying in his right hand a cudgel, whose leaden knob could be seen, was standing a few paces behind Jean Valjean, who was leaning over Marius. It was with the help of the darkness a species of apparition ; a simple man would have been frightened at it owing to the twilight, and a thoughtful one on account of the bludgeon. Jean Valjean recognized Javert. The reader has doubtless guessed that the tracker of Thénardier was no other than Javert. Javert, after his un hoped-for escape from the barricade, went to the Prefecture of Police, made a verbal report to the prefect in person in a short audience, and then immediately returned to duty, which implied—the note found on him will be remembered—a certain surveillance of the right bank of the river at the Champs Elysées, which had for some time past attracted the attention of the police. There he perceived Thénardier and followed him. The rest is known.

It will be also understood that the grating so obligingly opened for Jean Valjean was a clever trick on the part of Thénardier. He felt that Javert was still there ; the watched man has a scent which never deceives him ; and it was necessary to throw a bone to this greyhound. An assassin, what a chance ! he could not let it slip. Thénardier, on putting Jean Valjean outside in his place, offered a prey to the policeman, made him loose his hold, caused himself to be forgotten in a greater adventure, recompensed Javert for his loss of time, which always flatters a spy, gained thirty francs, and fully intended for his own part to escape by the help of this diversion.

Jean Valjean had passed from one rock to another ; these two meetings one upon the other, falling from Thénardier on Javert, were rude. Javert did not recognize Jean Valjean, who, as we have said, no longer resembled himself. He did not unfold his arms, but secured his grasp of his bludgeon by an imperceptible movement, and said, in a sharp, calm voice,—

“ Who are you ? ”

“ Myself.”

“ What do you mean ? ”

“ I am Jean Valjean.”

Javert placed his cudgel between his teeth, bent his knees,

bowed his back, laid his two powerful hands on Jean Valjean's shoulders, which they held as in two vices, examined, and recognized him. Their faces almost touched, and Javert's glance was terrific. Jean Valjean remained inert under Javert's gripe, like a lion enduring the claw of a lynx.

"Inspector Javert," he said, "you have me. Besides, since this morning I have considered myself your prisoner. I did not give you my address in order to try and escape you. Take me, but grant me one thing."

Javert did not seem to hear, but kept his eye-balls fixed on Jean Valjean. His wrinkled chin thrust up his lips toward his nose, a sign of stern reverie. At length he loosed his hold of Jean Valjean, drew himself up, clutched his cudgel, and, as if in a dream, muttered rather than asked this question,—

"What are you doing here? and who is that man?"

Jean Valjean replied, and the sound of his voice seemed to awaken Javert,—

"It is of him that I wished to speak. Do with me as you please, but help me first to carry him home. I only ask this of you."

Javert's face was contracted in the same way as it always was when any one believed him capable of a concession; still he did not say no. He stopped again, took from his pocket a handkerchief, which he dipped in the water, and wiped Marius' ensanguined forehead.

"This man was at the barricade," he said in a low voice, and as if speaking to himself; "he was the one whom they called Marius."

He was a first-class spy, who had observed everything, listened to everything, heard everything, and picked up everything when he believed himself a dead man; who even spied in his death agony, and, standing on the first step of the sepulchre, took notes. He seized Marius' hand, and felt his pulse.

"He is wounded," said Jean Valjean.

"He is a dead man," said Javert.

Jean Valjean replied,—

"No; not yet."

"Then you brought him from the barricade here?" Javert observed.

His preoccupation must have been great for him not to dwell on this alarming escape through the sewers, and not even remark Jean Valjean's silence after his question. Jean

Valjean, on his side, seemed to have a sole thought; he continued,—

“ He lives in the Marais, in the Rue des Filles du Calvaire, with his grandfather. I do not know his name.”

Jean Valjean felt in Marius’ pocket, took out the portfolio, opened it at the page on which Marius had written in pencil, and offered it to Javert. There was still sufficient floating light in the air to be able to read, and Javert, besides, had in his eyes the feline phosphorescence of night birds. He deciphered the few lines written by Marius, and growled, “ Gille-normand, No. 6, Rue des Filles du Calvaire.” Then he cried, “ Driver ! ”

Our readers will remember the coachman waiting above in case of need. A moment after the hackney, which came down the incline leading to the watering-place, was on the bank. Marius was deposited on the back seat, and Javert sat down by Jean Valjean’s side on the front one. When the door was closed the fiacre started off rapidly along the quays in the direction of the Bastille. They quitted the quay and turned into the streets; and the driver, a black outline on his seat, lashed his lean horses. There was an icy silence in the hackney-coach; Marius motionless, with his body reclining in one corner, his head on his chest, his arms pendant, and his legs stiff, appeared to be only waiting for a coffin; Jean Valjean seemed made of gloom, and Javert of stone; and in this fiacre full of night, whose interior, each time that it passed a lamp, seemed to be lividly lit up as if by an intermittent flash, accident united and appeared to confront the three immobilities of tragedy,—the corpse, the spectre, and the statue.

CHAPTER LVII.

RETURN OF THE SON PRODIGAL OF HIS LIFE.

At each jolt over the pavement a drop of blood fell from Marius’ hair. It was quite night when the hackney-coach reached No. 6, Rue des Filles du Calvaire. Javert got out first, examined at a glance the number over the gateway, and raising the heavy knocker of hammered steel, stamped in the old style with a goat and a satyr contending, gave a violent knock. The

folding-door opened slightly, and Javert pushed it open. The porter half showed himself, yawning, and scarce awake, candle in hand. All were asleep in the house, for people go to bed early at the Marais, especially on days of rioting. This good old district, terrified by the revolution, takes refuge in sleep, like children who, when they hear old Bogey coming, quickly hide their heads under the counterpane. In the mean while Jean Valjean and the driver removed Marius from the hackney-coach, Valjean holding him under the arm-pits and the coachman under the knees. While carrying Marius in this way Jean Valjean passed his hands under his clothes, which were terribly torn, felt his chest, and assured himself that his heart still beat. It even beat a little less feebly, as if the motion of the vehicle had produced a certain return of life. Javert addressed the porter in the tone which becomes the government in the presence of the porter of a factious man.

“Any one live here of the name of Gillenormand?”

“It is here. What do you want with him?”

“We have brought home his son.”

“His son?” the porter asked in amazement.

“He is dead.”

Jean Valjean, who arrived ragged and filthy behind Javert, and whom the porter regarded with some horror, made him a sign that it was not so. The porter seemed neither to understand Javert’s remark nor Jean Valjean’s nod. Javert continued,—

“He has been to the barricade, and here he is.”

“To the barricade!” the porter exclaimed.

“He has been killed. Go and wake his father.”

The porter did not stir.

“Be off!” Javert continued, and added, “There will be a funeral here to-morrow.”

For Javert, the ordinary incidents of the streets were classified categorically, which is the commencement of foresight and surveillance, and each eventuality had its compartment; the possible facts were to some extent kept in drawers, whence they issued on occasions, in variable quantities; there were in the streets, disturbance, riot, carnival, and interments.

The porter limited himself to awaking Basque; Basque awoke Nicolette; Nicolette awoke Aunt Gillenormand. As for the grandfather he was left to sleep, as it was thought that he would know the affair quite soon enough as it was. Marius was carried to the first floor, no one being acquainted with the fact in the rest of the house, and he was laid on an old sofa in M. Gillenormand’s ante-room, and, while Basque went to fetch a

physician and Nicolette opened the linen presses, Jean Valjean felt Javert touch his shoulder. He understood, and went down, Javert following close at his heels. The porter saw them depart, as he had seen them arrive, with a startled sleepiness. They got into the hackney-coach, and the driver on his box.

"Inspector Javert," Jean Valjean said, "grant me one thing more."

"What is it?" Javert answered roughly.

"Let me go home for a moment, and you can then do with me what you please."

Javert remained silent for a few moments with his chin thrust into the collar of his great coat, and then let down the front window.

"Driver," he said, "No. 7, Rue de l'Homme Armé."

They did not speak during the entire ride. What did Jean Valjean want? to finish what he had begun; to warn Cosette, tell her where Marius was, give her perhaps some other useful information, and make, if he could, certain final arrangements. For his own part, as regarded what concerned him personally, it was all over; he had been arrested by Javert, and did not resist. Any other than he, in such a situation, would perhaps have vaguely thought of the rope which Thénardier had given him, and the bars of the first cell he entered; but since his meeting with the bishop Jean Valjean had within him a profound religious hesitation against every assault, even on himself. Suicide, that mysterious attack on the unknown, which may contain to a certain extent the death of the soul, was impossible to Jean Valjean.

On entering the Rue de l'Homme Armé the coach stopped, as the street was too narrow for vehicles to pass along it. Jean Valjean and Javert got out. The driver humbly represented to "Mr Inspector" that the Utrecht velvet of his coach was quite spoilt by the blood of the assassinated man and the filth of the assassin—that is how he understood the affair, and he added that an indemnity was due to him. At the same time taking his licence-book from his pocket, he begged Mr Inspector to have the kindness to write him a little bit of a certificate. Javert thrust back the book which the driver offered him and said,—

"How much do you want, including the time you waited and the journey?"

"It's seven hours and a quarter," the driver answered, "and my velvet was bran new. Eighty francs, Mr Inspector."

Javert took from his pocket four Napoleons, and dismissed

the hackney-coach. Jean Valjean thought that it was Javert's intention to take him on foot to the Blanes Manteaux post, or that of the Archives, which were close by. They entered the street, which was as usual deserted. Javert followed Jean Valjean and, on reaching No. 7, the latter rapped, and the gate opened.

"Very good," said Javert, "go up."

He added, with a strange expression, and as if making an effort to speak as he was doing,—

"I will wait for you here."

Jean Valjean looked at Javert, for this style of conduct was not at all a habit of Javert's. Still it could not surprise him greatly that Javert should now place in him a sort of haughty confidence, the confidence of the cat which grants the mouse liberty to the length of its claw. He thrust open the gate, entered the house, shouted to the porter, who was in bed, and had pulled the string in that posture, "It is I," and mounted the staircase. On reaching the first storey he paused, for every *Via dolorosa* has its stations. The window was open, and as is the case in many old houses, the staircase obtained light from, and looked out on, the street. The street lantern, situated precisely opposite, threw some little light on the stairs, which caused a saving of a lamp. Jean Valjean, either to breathe or mechanically, thrust his head out of this window and looked down into the street. It is short, and the lamp lit it from one end to the other. Jean Valjean had a bedazzlement of stupor: there was no one in it.

Javert had gone away.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE GRANDFATHER.

BASQUE and the porter had carried Marius, who was still lying motionless on the sofa on which he had been laid on arriving, into the drawing-room. The physician, who had been sent for, hurried in, and Aunt Gillenormand had risen. Aunt Gillenormand came and went, horrified, clasping her hands, and incapable of doing anything but saying, "Can it be possible?" She added at intervals, "Everything will be stained with blood." When the first horror had passed away a certain philosophy of

the situation appeared even in her mind, and was translated by the exclamation, "It must end in that way." She did not go so far, though, as "*Did I not say so?*" which is usual on occasions of this nature.

By the surgeon's orders a tester-bed was put up near the sofa. He examined Marius, and after satisfying himself that the pulse still beat, that the patient had no penetrating wound in the chest, and that the blood at the corners of the lips came from the nostrils, he had him laid flat on the bed, without a pillow, the head level with the body, and even a little lower, and with naked bust, in order to facilitate the breathing. Mademoiselle Gillenormand, seeing that Marius was being undressed, withdrew, and told her beads in her bed-room. The body had received no internal injury; a ball, deadened by the pocket-book, had deviated, and passed round the ribs with a frightful gash, but as it was not deep it was, therefore, not dangerous. The long subterranean march had completed the dislocation of the collar-bone, and there were serious injuries there. The arms were covered with sabre-cuts: no scar disfigured the face, but the head was cut all over with gashes: what would be the state of these wounds on the head? did they stop at the scalp or did they reach the brain? it was impossible to say yet. It was a serious symptom that they had caused the faintness. And men do not always awake from such fainting fits; the hemorrhage, moreover, had exhausted the wounded man. From the waist downward the lower part of the body had been protected by the barricade.

Basque and Nicolette tore up linen and prepared bandages: Nicolette sewed them and Basque rolled them. As they had no lint, the physician had temporarily checked the effusion of blood with cakes of wadding. By the side of the bed three candles burned on the table on which the surgeon's pocket-book lay open. He washed Marius' face and hair with cold water, and a bucket-full was red in an instant. The porter, candle in hand, lighted him. The surgeon seemed to be thinking sadly: from time to time, he gave a negative shake of the head, as if answering some question which he mentally addressed to himself. Such mysterious dialogues of the physician with himself are a bad sign for the patient. At the moment when the surgeon was wiping the face and gently touching with his finger the still closed eyelids, a door opened at the end of the room, and a tall, pale figure appeared,—it was the grandfather. The riot during the last two days had greatly agitated, offended, and occupied M. Gillenormand; he had not been able to sleep on the previous night, and he had been feverish

all day. At night he went to bed at a very early hour, bidding his people bar up the house, and had fallen asleep through weariness.

Old men have a fragile sleep. M. Gillenormand's bedroom joined the drawing-room, and whatever precautions had been taken, the noise awoke him. Surprised by the crack of light which he saw in his door, he had got out of bed, and groped his way to the door. He was standing on the threshold, with one hand on the handle, his head slightly bent forward and shaking, his body enfolded in a white dressing-gown, as straight and creaseless as a winding-sheet: he was surprised, and looked like a ghost peering into a tomb. He noticed the bed, and on the mattress this young bleeding man, of the whiteness of wax, with closed eyes, open mouth, livid cheeks, naked to the waist, marked all over with vermillion, wounded, motionless, and brightly illumined.

The grandfather had from head to foot that shudder which ossified limbs can have. His eyes, whose cornea was yellow owing to their great age, were veiled by a sort of glassy stare; his entire face assumed in an instant the earthy angles of a skeleton's head; his arms fell pendant as if a spring had been broken in them, and his stupor was displayed by the out-spreading of all the fingers of his two old trembling hands. His knees formed a salient angle, displaying through the opening of his dressing-gown his poor naked legs bristling with white hairs, and he murmured,—

“Marius!”

“He has just been brought here, sir,” said Basque; “he went to the barricade, and—”

“He is dead,” the old gentleman exclaimed, in a terrible voice. “Oh! the brigand!”

Then, a sort of sepulchral transfiguration drew up this centenarian as straight as a young man.

“You are the surgeon, sir,” he said, “begin by telling me one thing. He is dead, is he not?”

The surgeon, who was frightfully anxious, maintained silence, and M. Gillenormand writhed his hands with a burst of terrifying laughter.

“He is dead, he is dead! he has let himself be killed at the barricade through hatred of me; it was against me that he did it! ah, the blood-drinker, that is the way in which he returns to me. Woe of my life, he is dead!”

He went to a window, opened it quite wide, as if he were stifling, and standing there began speaking to the night in the street.

"Stabbed, sabred, massacred, exterminated, slashed, cut to pieces! Do you see that, the beggar! he knew very well that I expected him, and that I had his room ready, and that I had placed at my bed-head his portrait when he was a child! He knew very well that he need only return, and that for years I had been recalling him, and that I sat at night by my fire-side with my hands on my knees, not knowing what to do, and that I was crazy about him! You knew that very well, you had only to return and say, 'It is I,' and you would be the master of the house, and I would obey you, and you could do anything you liked with your old ass of a grandfather! You knew it very well, and said,—'No, he is a royalist, I will not go!' and you went to the barricades, and have let yourself be killed out of spite! in order to revenge yourself for what I said on the subject of Monsieur le Duc de Berry! Is not that infamous! Go to bed and sleep quietly, for he is dead. This is my awaking."

The surgeon, who was beginning to be anxious for both, left Marius, and, going up to M. Gillenormand, took his arm. The grandfather turned, looked at him with eyes that seemed dilated and blood-shot, and said calmly,—

"I thank you, sir, I am calm. I am a man. I saw the death of Louis XVI., and can endure events. There is one thing that is terrible, it is the thought that it is your newspapers which do all the mischief. You have scribblers, speakers, lawyers, orators, tribunes, discussions, progress, lights, rights of man, liberty of the press, and that is the way in which your children are brought back to your houses. Oh, Marius, it is abominable! killed! dead before me! a barricade! oh, the bandit! Doctor, you live in the quarter, I believe? Oh yes, I know you well. I see your cab pass from my window. Well, I will tell you. You would do wrong to believe that I am in a passion, for people do not get in a passion with a dead man, that would be stupid. That is a boy I brought up; I was old when he was still quite little. He played in the Tuileries with his little spade and his little chair, and, in order that the inspectors should not scold, I used to fill up with my cane the holes which he made with his spade. One day he cried, 'Down with Louis XVIII.!' and went off. It is not my fault. He was all pink and white, and his mother is dead; have you noticed that all little children are light-haired? Supposing that he is a son of one of those brigands of the Loire, children are innocent of their fathers' crimes. I remember him when he was so high, and he could never manage to pronounce a *d*. He spoke so sweetly and incomprehensibly, that you might have fancied

him a bird. I remember one day that a circle was formed in front of the Farnese Hercules to admire that child, for he was so lovely. He had a head such as you see in pictures. I used to speak loud to him, and threaten him with my cane, but he knew very well that it was a joke. In the morning, when he entered my room, I scolded, but it produced the effect of sunshine upon me. It is not possible to defend yourself against these brats, for they take you, and hold you, and do not let you go again. It is the fact that there never was a Cupid like that child, and now what do you say of your Lafayette, your Benjamin Constant, and your Tirecuir de Corcelles, who kill him for me ? oh, it cannot pass like that."

He went up to Marius, who was still livid, motionless, and began wringing his arms again. The old gentleman's white lips moved as it were mechanically, and allowed indistinct sentences to pass, which were scarce audible. "Ah, heartless, ah ! club-bist ! ah, scoundrel ! ah ! Septembrizer !" reproaches uttered in a low voice by a dying man to a corpse. By degrees, as such internal eruptions must always burst forth, the flood of words returned, but the grandfather seemed no longer to have the strength to utter them ; his voice was so hollow and choked that it seemed to come from the other brink of an abyss.

"I do not care a bit, I will die too. And then to think there is not a she-devil in Paris who would not be happy to produce the happiness of that scoundrel ! a scamp, who, instead of amusing himself and enjoying life, went to fight, and let himself be shot like a brute ! and for whom, and for what ? for the republic ! instead of going to dance at the Chaumière, as is the duty of young men. It is really worth while being twenty years of age. The republic, a fine absurdity ! Poor mothers bring pretty boys into the world for that ! Well, he is dead, that will make two hearses under the gate-way. So you have got yourself served in that way for love of General Lamarque ! what did General Lamarque do for you ? a sabrer ! a chatterer ! to get oneself killed for a dead man ! is it not enough to drive one mad ? Can you understand that ? at twenty ! and without turning his head to see whether he left anything behind him ! Now, see the poor old fellows who are obliged to die all alone ; rot in your corner, owl ! Well, after all, that is what I hoped for, and is for the best, as it will kill me right off. I am too old, I am one hundred, I am a hundred thousand, and I had a right to be dead long ago. Well, this blow settles it ; it is all over, what happiness ! what is the use of making him inhale ammonia and all that pile of drugs ? you ass of a doctor, you are wasting your time. There, he's dead, quite dead. I know

it, for I am dead too. He did not do the thing by halves. Yes, the present age is infamous, infamous, infamous, and that is what I think of you, your ideas, your systems, your masters, your oracles, your doctors, your scamps of writers, your rogues of philosophers, and all the revolutions which have startled the Tuilleries ravens during the last sixty years. And since you were pitiless in letting yourself be killed so, I will not even feel sorry at your death ; do you hear, assassin ! ”

At this moment Marius slowly opened his eyes, and his glance, still veiled by lethargic surprise, settled on M. Gille-normand.

“ Marius ! ” the old man cried, “ Marius, my little Marius ! my child ! my beloved son ! you open your eyes ! you look at me ! you are alive ! thanks ! ”

And he fell down in a fainting fit.

CHAPTER LIX.

THE END OF JAVERT.

JAVERT retired slowly from the Rue de l'Homme Armé. He walked with drooping head for the first time in his life, and equally for the first time in his life with his hands behind his back. Up to that day Javert had only assumed, of Napoleon's two attitudes, the one which expresses resolution, the arms folded on the chest; the one indicating uncertainty, the arms behind the back, was unknown to him. Now a change had taken place, and his whole person, slow and sombre, was stamped with anxiety. He buried himself in the silent streets, but followed a certain direction; he went by the shortest road to the Seine, reached the Quai des Ormes, walked along it, passed the Grève, and stopped, a little distance from the Châtelet Square, at the corner of the Pont Notre Dame. The Seine makes there, between that bridge and the Pont au Change on one side, and the Quai de la Megisserie and the Quai aux Fleurs on the other, a species of square lake traversed by a rapid. This point of the Seine is feared by sailors; nothing can be more dangerous than this rapid, which was contracted at that period and irritated by the stakes of the mill bridge, since demolished. The two bridges, so close to each other, heighten the danger, for the water hurries

formidably through the arches. Men who fall in there do not reappear, and the best swimmers are drowned.

Javert leant his elbows on the parapet, his chin on his hand, and while his hands mechanically closed on his thick whiskers, he reflected. A novelty, a revolution, a catastrophe had just taken place within him, and he must examine into it. Javert was suffering horribly, and for some hours past Javert had ceased to be simple. He was troubled ; this brain, so limpid in its blindness, had lost its transparency, and there was a cloud in this crystal. Javert felt in his conscience duty doubled, and he could not hide the fact from himself. When he met Jean Valjean so unexpectedly on the Seine bank, he had something within him of the wolf that recaptures its prey and the dog that finds its master again. He saw before him two roads, both equally straight, but he saw two of them, and this terrified him, as he had never known in his life but one straight line. And, poignant agony, these two roads were contrary, and one of these right lines excluded the other. Which of the two was the true one ? His situation was indescribable : to owe his life to a malefactor, to accept this debt and repay him ; to be, in spite of himself, on the same footing with an escaped convict, and requite one service with another service ; to let it be said to him, Be off, and to say in his turn, Be free ; to sacrifice to personal motives duty, that general obligation, and to feel in these personal motives something general too, and perhaps superior ; to betray society in order to remain faithful to his conscience—that all these absurdities should be realized, and accumulated upon him, was what startled him. One thing had astonished him, that Jean Valjean had shown him mercy, and one thing had petrified him, that he, Javert, had shown mercy to Jean Valjean.

Where was he ? he sought and no longer found himself. What was he to do now ? to give up Jean Valjean was bad, to leave Jean Valjean at liberty was bad. In the former case, the man of authority fell lower than the man of the galleys ; in the second, a convict rose higher than the law, and set his foot upon it. In either case, dishonour for him, Javert. Whatever resolution he might form, there was a fall, for destiny has certain extremities projecting over the impossible, beyond which life is only a precipice. Javert had reached one of these extremities : one of his anxieties was to be constrained to think, and the very violence of all these contradictory emotions compelled him to do so. Now thought was an unusual thing for him, and singularly painful. There is always in thought a certain amount of internal rebellion, and he was irritated at

having that within him. Thought, no matter on what subject beyond the narrow circle of his destiny, would have been to him in any case useless and wearisome, but thinking about the day which had just passed was a torture. And yet he must after such shocks look into his conscience, and give himself an account of himself. What he had done caused him to shudder; he, Javert, had thought fit to decide against all police regulations, against all social and judicial organization, and against the entire codes, a setting at liberty: that had suited him. He had substituted his own affairs for public affairs, was not that unjustifiable? Each time that he stood facing the nameless action which he had committed, he trembled from head to foot. What should he resolve on? Only one resource was left him, to return at full speed to the Rue de l'Homme Armé, and lock up Jean Valjean. It was clear that this was what he ought to do, but he could not do it. Something barred the way on that side. What! is there anything in the world besides sentences, the police, and the authorities? Javert was overwhelmed.

A sacred galley-slave! a convict impregnable by justice, and that through the deed of Javert! Was it not frightful that Javert and Jean Valjean, the man made to punish and the man made to endure, that these two men, who were both the property of the law, should have reached the point of placing themselves both above the law? What! such enormities could happen and no one be punished? Jean Valjean, stronger than the whole social order, would be free, and he, Javert, would continue to eat the bread of the Government! His reverie gradually became terrible: he might through this reverie have reproached himself slightly on the subject of the insurgent carried home to the Rue des Filles du Calvaire, but he did not think of it. The slighter fault was lost in the greater, and, besides, this insurgent was evidently a dead man, and, legally, death checks prosecution. Jean Valjean,—that was the weight which he had on his mind; and he disconcerted him. All the axioms which had been the support of his whole life crumbled away before this man, and the generosity of Jean Valjean to him, Javert, overwhelmed him. Other facts which he remembered, and which he had formerly treated as falsehoods and folly, now returned to his mind as realities. M. Madeleine reappeared behind Jean Valjean, and the two figures were blended into one, which was venerable. Javert felt that something horrible, admiration for a convict, was entering his soul. Respect for a galley-slave, is it possible? he shuddered at it, and could not escape from it, although he struggled! he was reduced to confess in his soul the sublimity of this villain, and this was odious. A benevolent malefactor, a

compassionate, gentle, helping, and merciful convict, repaying good for evil, pardon for hatred, preferring pity to hatred, ready to destroy himself sooner than his enemy, saving the man who had struck him, kneeling on the pinnacle of virtue, and nearer to the angels than to man. Javert was constrained to confess to himself that such a monster existed.

This could not last. Assuredly—and we lay stress on the fact—he had not yielded without resistance to this monster, to this infamous angel, to this hideous hero, at whom he felt almost as indignant as stupefied. Twenty times, while in that hackney-coach face to face with Jean Valjean, the legal tiger had roared within him. Twenty times he had felt tempted to hurl himself on Jean Valjean, to seize and devour him, that is to say, arrest him. What more simple, in fact! shout to the nearest post before which he passed,—“Here is a convict who has broken his ban!” and then go away, leave the condemned man there, be ignorant of the rest, and interfere no further. This man is eternally the prisoner of the law, and the law will do what it pleases with him. What was fairer? Javert had said all this to himself, he had wished to pass sentence, act, apprehend the man, and then, as now, had been unable, and each time that his hand was convulsively raised to Jean Valjean’s collar, it fell back as if under an enormous weight, and he heard in the bottom of his heart a voice, a strange voice, crying to him, “That is well. Give up your saviour, then send for Pontius Pilate’s basin, and wash your hands in it!”

Then his thoughts reverted to himself, and by the side of Jean Valjean aggrandized he saw himself degraded. A convict was his benefactor, but why had he allowed that man to let him live? he had the right of being killed at that barricade, and should have employed that right. It would have been better to call the other insurgents to his aid against Jean Valjean and have himself shot by force. His supreme agony was the disappearance of certainty, and he felt himself uprooted. The code was now only a stump in his hand, and he had to deal with scruples of an unknown species. There was within him a sentimental revelation entirely distinct from the legal affirmation, his sole measure hitherto, and it was not sufficient to remain in his old honesty. A whole order of unexpected facts arose and subjugated him, an entire new world appeared to his soul; benefits accepted and returned, devotion, mercy, indulgence, violence done by pity to austerity, no more definitive condemnation, no more damnation, the possibility of a tear in the eye of the law, and perhaps some justice according to God acting in an inverse ratio to justice according to man. He perceived in

the darkness the rising of an unknown moral sun, and he was horrified and dazzled. He was an owl forced to look like the eagle.

He said to himself that it was true, then, that there were exceptions, that authority might be disconcerted, that the rule might fall short in the presence of a fact, that everything was not contained in the text of a code, that the unforeseen made itself obeyed, that the virtue of a convict might set a snare for the virtue of a functionary, that the monstrous might be divine, that destiny had such ambuscades, and he thought with despair that he had himself not been protected from a surprise. He was compelled to recognize that goodness existed ; this galley-slave had been good, and he, too, extraordinary to say, had been good also. Hence he was becoming depraved. He felt that he was a coward, and it horrified him. The ideal for Javert was not to be human, grand, or sublime, it was to be irreproachable, and now he had broken down. How had he reached this stage ? how had all this happened ? he could not have told himself. He took his head between his hands, but whatever he might do, he could not succeed in explaining it. He certainly had had the intention of delivering Jean Valjean over to the law, of which Jean Valjean was the captive and of which he was the slave. He had not confessed to himself for a single instant, while he held him, that he had a thought of letting him go ; it was to some extent unconsciously that his hand had opened and allowed him to escape.

All sorts of enigmatic novelties passed before his eyes. He asked himself questions, and gave himself answers, and his answers terrified him. He asked himself, “ What has this convict, this desperate man, whom I followed to persecution, and who had me under his heel, and could have avenged himself, and ought to have acted so, both for his rancour and his security, done in leaving me my life, and showing me mercy ? his duty ? no, something more. And what have I done in showing him mercy in my turn ? my duty ? no, something more. Is there, then, something more than duty ? ” Here he was terrified, he was thrown off his balance, one of the scales fell into the abyss, the other ascended to heaven ; and Javert felt no less horror at the one above than at the one below. Without being the least in the world what is termed a Voltairian, or philosopher, or incredulous man, respectful, on the contrary, instinctively to the Established Church, he only knew it as an august fragment of the social *ensemble* ; order was his dogma, and sufficient for him. Since he had attained man’s age and office, he had set nearly all his religion in the police, being—and we employ the words without the slightest irony, and in their most serious acceptation,

—being, as we have said, a spy as another man is a priest. He had a superior, M. Gisquet, but he had never thought up to this day of that other superior, God. He felt the presence of this new Chief unexpectedly, and was troubled by Him. He was thrown out of gear by this person ; he knew not what to do with this Superior, for he was not ignorant that the subordinate is bound always to bow the head, that he must neither disobey, nor blame, nor discuss, and that when facing a superior who astonishes him too much, the inferior has no other resource but his resignation. But how could he manage to give in his resignation to God ?

However this might be, one fact to which he constantly returned, and which ruled everything else, was that he had just committed a frightful infraction of the law. He had closed his eyes to a relapsed convict who had broken his ban ; he had set a galley-slave at liberty. He had stolen from the laws a man who belonged to them. He had done this, and no longer understood himself. He was not certain of being himself. The very reasons of his deed escaped him, and he only felt the dizziness it produced. He had lived up to this moment in that blind faith which engenders a dark probity ; and this faith was leaving him, this probity had failed him. All that he had believed was dissipated, and truths which he would not have, inexorably besieged him. He must henceforth be another man, and he suffered the strange pain of a conscience suddenly operated on for cataract. He saw what it was repulsive to him to see, and felt himself spent, useless, dislocated from his past life, discharged and dissolved. Authority was dead within him, and he no longer had a reason for living. Terrible situation ! to feel affected. To be made of granite, and doubt ! to be the statue of punishment cast all of one piece in the mould of the law, and to suddenly perceive that you have under your bronze bosom something absurd and disobedient, which almost resembles a heart ! to have requited good for good, though you have said to yourself up to this day that such good is evil ! to be the watch-dog and fawn ! to be ice and melt ! to be a pair of pincers, and become a hand ! suddenly to feel your fingers opening ! to lose your hold. Oh ! what a frightful thing ! The man projectile, no longer knowing his road, and recoiling ! to be obliged to confess this ; infallibility is not infallible ; there may be an error in the dogma, all is not said when a code has spoken, society is not perfect, authority is complicated with vacillation, a crack in the immutable is possible, judges are men, the law may be deceived, the courts may make a mistake ! to see a flaw in the immense blue pane of the firmament.

What was taking place in Javert was the Fampoux of a rectilinear conscience, the overthrow of a mind, the crushing of a probity irresistibly hurled in a straight line, and breaking itself against GOD. It was certainly strange that the stoker of order, the mechanician of authority, mounted on the blind iron horse, could be unsaddled by a beam of light ! that the incom- mutable, the direct, the correct, the geometrical, the passive, the perfect, could bend ; that there should be for a locomotive a road to Damascus ! GOD, ever within man, and Himself the true conscience, refractory to the false conscience ; the spark forbidden to expire, the ray ordered to remember the sun, the mind enjoined to recognize the true absolute when it confronts itself with the fictitious absolute, a humanity that cannot be lost ; the human heart inadmissible—did Javert comprehend this splendid phenomenon, the most glorious, perhaps, of our internal prodigies ? did he penetrate it ? did he explain it to himself ? Evidently no. But under the pressure of this incom- prehensible incontestability he felt his brain cracking. He was less transfigured than the victim of this prodigy : he endured it with exasperation, and only saw in all this an immense difficulty of living. It seemed to him as if henceforth his breathing was eternally impeded. He was not accustomed to have anything unknown over his head, hitherto everything he had above him had been to his eye a clear, simple, limpid surface ; there was nothing unknown or obscure ; nothing but what was definite, coördinated, enchainèd, precise, exact, circumscribed, limited, and closed ; everything foreseen, authority was a flat surface, there was no fall in it, or dizziness before it. Javert had never seen anything unknown except below him. Irregularity, unexpected things, the disorderly opening of the chaos, and a possible fall over a precipice, all this was the fact of the lower regions, of the rebels, the wicked and the wretched. How Javert threw himself back, and was suddenly startled by this extraordinary apparition,—a gulf above him !

What then ! the world was dismantled from top to bottom and absolutely disconcerted ! in what could men trust, when what they felt convinced of was crumbling away ! What ! the flaw in the cuirass of society could be formed by a magnanimous scoundrel ! What ! an honest servant of the law could find himself caught between two crimes, the crime of letting a man escape and the crime of arresting him ! all was not certain, then, in the orders given by the State to the official ! there could be blind alleys in duty ! What, then ! all this was real ! was it true that an ex-bandit, bowed under condemnations, could draw himself up and end by being in the right ? was this

credible? were there, then, cases in which the law must retire before transfigured crime and stammer its apologies! Yes, it was so! and Javert saw it! and Javert touched it! and not only could he not deny it, but he had a share in it. These were realities, and it was abominable that real facts could attain such a deformity. If facts did their duty they would restrict themselves to bring proofs of the law; for facts are sent by GOD. Was, then, anarchy about to descend from on high? Thus, both in the exaggeration of agony and the optical illusion of consternation, everything which might have restricted and corrected his impression faded away, and society, the human race, and the universe henceforth were contained for his eyes in a simple and hideous outline—punishment, the thing tried, the strength due to the legislature, the decrees of sovereign courts, the magistracy, the government, prevention, and repression, official wisdom, legal infallibility, the principle of authority, all the dogmas on which political and civil security, the sovereignty, justice, logic flowing from the code and public truth, were a heap of ruins, chaos; he himself, Javert, the watcher of order, incorruptibility in the service of the police, the Providence-dog of society, conquered and hurled to the ground, and on the summit of all this ruin stood a man in a green cap, and with a glory round his brow; such was the state of overthrow he had reached, such the frightful vision which he had in his mind. Was this endurable? no, it was a violent state, were there ever one, and there were only two ways of escaping from it; one was to go resolutely to Jean Valjean and restore to the dungeon the man of the galleys; the other—

Javert left the parapet, and with head erect this time walked firmly toward the guard-room indicated by a lantern at one of the corners of the Chatelet Square. On reaching it he saw through the window a policeman, and went in. The police recognize each other merely by the way in which they push open the door of a guard-room. Javert mentioned his name, showed his card to the sergeant, and sat down at the table on which a candle was burning. There were also on the table a pen, a leaden inkstand, and paper for drawing up verbal processes, and the reports of the night patrols. This table, always completed by a straw chair, is an institution; it exists in all police offices, it is always adorned with a boxwood saucer full of sawdust, and a box of red wafers, and it is the lower stage of the official style. It is here that the state literature commences. Javert took the pen and a sheet of paper and began writing. This is what he wrote:—

"A FEW REMARKS FOR THE GOOD OF THE SERVICE.

"1. I beg M. le Prefet to cast his eyes on this.

"2. Prisoners when they return from examination at the magistrate's office take off their shoes and remain barefoot on the slabs while they are being searched. This entails infirmary expenses.

"3. Tracking is good, with relays of agents at regular distances; but on important occasions two agents at the least should not let each other out of sight, because, if for any reason one agent were to fail in his duty, the other would watch him and take his place.

"4. There is no explanation why the special rules of the prison of the Madelonnettes prohibit a prisoner from having a chair, even if he pay for it.

"5. At the Madelonnettes there are only two gratings to the canteen, which allows the canteen woman to let the prisoners touch her hand.

"6. The prisoners called barkers, who call the other prisoners to the visitor's room, demand two sous from each prisoner for crying his name distinctly. This is a robbery.

"7. Ten sous are stopped a prisoner working in the weaving room for a running thread; this is an abuse on the part of the manager, as the cloth is not the less good.

"8. It is annoying that visitors to la Force are obliged to pass through the boys' court in proceeding to the speaking-room of St Marie l'Egyptienne.

"9. It is certain that gendarmes are daily heard repeating the examination of prisoners by the magistrates, in the court-yard of the prefecture. For a gendarme, who ought to be sacred, to repeat what he has heard in the office is a serious breach of duty.

"10. Madame Henry is an honest woman, her canteen is very clean, but it is wrong for a woman to hold the key of the secret cells. This is not worthy of the Conciergerie of a great civilization."

Javert wrote these lines in his calmest and most correct handwriting, not omitting to cross a *t*, and making the paper cry firmly beneath his pen. Under the last line he signed,

"JAVERT,

"Inspector of the 1st class,

"At the post of the Chatelet Square, June 7, 1832,
about one in the morning."

Javert dried the ink on the paper, folded it like a letter, sealed it, wrote on the back, *Note for the Administration*, left it

on the table and quitted the guard-room. The glass door fell back after him. He again diagonally crossed the Chatelet Square, reached the quay again, and went back with automatic precision to the same spot which he had left a quarter of an hour previously ; he bent down and found himself again in the same attitude on the same parapet slab, it seemed as if he had not stirred. The darkness was complete, for it was the sepulchral moment which follows midnight, a ceiling of clouds hid the stars : the houses in the Cité did not display a single light, no one passed, all the streets and quays that could be seen were deserted, and Notre Dame and the towers of the Palace of Justice appeared lineaments of the night. A lamp reddened the edge of the quay, and the shadows of the bridges looked ghostly one behind the other. Rains had swelled the river. The spot where Javert was leaning was, it will be remembered, precisely above the rapids of the Seine, and that formidable whirlpool which unrolls itself and rolls itself up again like an endless screw. Javert stooped down and looked ; all was dark, and nothing could be distinguished. A sound of spray was audible, but the river was invisible. At moments in this dizzy depth a flash appeared and undulated, for water has the power, even on the darkest night, of obtaining light, no one knows whence, and changing itself into a lizard. The light faded away and all became indistinct again. Immensity seemed open there, and what was beneath was not water, but the gulf. The quay-wall, abrupt, confused, mingled with the vapour, produced the effect of a precipice of infinitude.

Nothing could be seen, but the hostile coldness of the water and the sickly smell of the damp stones could be felt. A ferocious breath rose from this abyss, and the swelling of the river, divined rather than perceived, the tragic muttering of the water, the mournful enormity of the bridge arches, a possible fall into this gloomy vacuum—all this shadow was full of horror. Javert remained for some moments motionless, gazing at this opening of the darkness, and considered the invisible with an intentness which resembled attention. All at once he took off his hat and placed it on the brink of the quay. A moment after a tall black figure, which any belated passer-by might have taken at a distance for a ghost, appeared standing on the parapet, stooped toward the Seine, then drew itself up, and fell straight into the darkness. There was a dull splash, and the shadows alone were in the secret of this obscure form which had disappeared beneath the waters.

CHAPTER LX.

IN THE WOOD AGAIN.

SOME time after the events which we have just recorded the Sieur Boulatruelle had a lively emotion. The Sieur Boulatruelle is the road-mender of Montfermeil of whom we have already caught a glimpse in the dark portions of this book. Boulatruelle, it will be possibly remembered, was a man occupied with troubled and various things. He broke stones and plundered travellers on the highway. Road-mender and robber, he had a dream : he believed in the treasures buried in the forest of Montfermeil. He hoped some day to find money in the ground at the foot of a tree, and in the mean while readily sought in the pockets of passers-by. Still, for the present, he was prudent, for he had just had a narrow escape. He was, as we know, picked up with the other ruffians in Jondrette's garret. There is some usefulness in a vice, for his drunkenness saved him, and it never could be cleared up whether he were there as a robber or as a robbed man. He was set at liberty on account of his proved intoxication on the night of the attack, and returned to the woods. He went back to his road from Gagny to Lagny, to break stones for the State, under surveillance, with hanging head and very thoughtful, slightly chilled by the robbery, which had almost ruined him, but turning with all the more tenderness to the wine which had saved him.

As for the lively emotion which he had a short time after his return beneath the turf-roof of his road-mender's cabin, it was this,—One morning Boulatruelle, while going as usual to work and to his lurking-place, possibly a little before day-break, perceived among the branches a man whose back he could alone see, but whose shape, so he fancied, through the mist and darkness, was not entirely unknown to him. Boulatruelle, though a drunkard, had a correct and lucid memory, an indispensable defensive weapon for any man who is at all on bad terms with legal order.

"Where the deuce have I seen some one like that man?" he asked.

But he could give himself no reply, save that he resembled somebody of whom he had a confused recollection. Boulatruelle, however, made his calculations, though he was unable

to settle the identity. This man did not belong to those parts, and had come there evidently a-foot, as no public vehicle passed through Montfermeil at that hour. He must have been walking all night. Where did he come from? no great distance, for he had neither havresack nor bundle. Doubtless from Paris. Why was he in this wood? why was he there at such an hour? What did he want here? Boulatruelle thought of the treasure: by dint of racking his memory he vaguely remembered having had, several years previously, a similar alarm on the subject of a man, who might very well be this man. While meditating he had, under the very weight of his meditation, hung his head, a natural but not clever thing. When he raised it again the man had disappeared in the forest and the mist.

"By the deuce," said Boulatruelle, "I will find him again, and discover to what parish that parishioner belongs. This walker of Patron-Minette has a motive, and I will know it. No one must have a secret in my forest without my being mixed up in it."

He took up his pick, which was very sharp. "Here's something," he growled, "to search the ground and a man."

And as one thread is attached to another thread, hobbling as fast as he could in the direction which the man must have followed, he began marching through the coppice. When he had gone about a hundred yards, day, which was beginning to break, aided him. Footsteps on the sand here and there, trampled grass, broken heather, young branches bent into the shrubs and rising with a graceful slowness, like the arms of a pretty woman who stretches herself on waking, gave him a species of trail. He followed it and then lost it, and time slipped away; he got deeper into the wood and reached a species of eminence. A matutinal sportsman passing at a distance along a path, and whistling the air of Guillery, gave him the idea of climbing up a tree, and though old, he was active. There was on the mound a very large beech, worthy of Tityrus and Boulatruelle, and he climbed up the tree as high as he could. The idea was a good one, for while exploring the solitude on the side where the wood is most entangled, Boulatruelle suddenly perceived the man, but had no sooner seen him than he lost him out of sight again. The man entered, or rather glided, into a rather distant clearing, masked by large trees, but which Boulatruelle knew very well, because he had noticed near a large heap of stones, a sick chestnut tree, bandaged with a zinc belt nailed upon it. This clearing is what was formerly called the Blaru-bottom, and the pile of

stones, intended no one knows for what purpose, which could be seen there thirty years ago, is doubtless there still. Nothing equals the longevity of a heap of stones, except that of a plank hoarding. It is there temporarily, what a reason for lasting!

Boulatruelle, with the rapidity of joy, tumbled off the tree, rather than came down it. The lair was found, and now he had only to seize the animal. The famous treasure he had dreamed of was probably there. It was no small undertaking to reach the clearing by beaten paths, which make a thousand annoying windings, it would take a good quarter of an hour; in a straight line through the wood, which is at that spot singularly dense, very thorny, and most aggressive, it would take half an hour at least. This is what Boulatruelle was wrong in not understanding; he believed in the straight line, a respectable optical illusion, which has ruined many men. The wood, bristling though it was, appeared to him the right road.

"Let us go by the Rue de Rivoli of the wolves," he said.

Boulatruelle, accustomed to crooked paths, this time committed the error of going straight, and resolutely cast himself among the shrubs. He had to contend with holly, nettles, hawthorns, eglantines, thistles, and most irascible roots, and was fearfully scratched. At the bottom of the ravine he came to a stream, which he was obliged to cross, and at last reached the Blaru clearing after forty minutes, perspiring, wet through, blowing, and ferocious. There was no one in the clearing. Boulatruelle hurried to the heap of stones; it was still in its place, and had not been carried off. As for the man, he had vanished in the forest. He had escaped; where? in which direction? into which clump of trees? it were impossible to guess. And, most crushing thing of all, there was behind the heap of stones and in front of the zinc-banded tree, a pick, forgotten or abandoned, and a hole; but the hole was empty.

"Robber!" Boulatruelle cried, shaking his fists at heaven.

CHAPTER LXI.

MARIUS was for a long time neither dead nor alive. He had for several weeks a fever accompanied by delirium, and

very serious brain symptoms caused by the commotions of the wounds in the head rather than the wounds themselves. He repeated Cosette's name for whole nights with the lugubrious loquacity of fever and the gloomy obstinacy of agony. The width of certain wounds was a serious danger, for the suppuration of wide wounds may always be absorbed into the system, and consequently kill the patient, under certain atmospheric influences; and at each change in the weather, at the slightest storm, the physician became anxious. "Mind that the patient suffers from no emotion," he repeated. The dressings were complicated and difficult, for the fixing of bandages and lint by the sparadrap had not been imagined at that period. Nicolette expended in lint a sheet "as large as a ceiling," she said; and it was not without difficulty that the chloruretted lotions and nitrate of silver reached the end of the gangrene. So long as there was danger, M. Gillenormand, broken-hearted by the bedside of his grandson, was like Marius, neither dead nor alive.

Every day, and sometimes twice a day, a white-haired and well-dressed gentleman, such was the description given by the porter, came to inquire after the wounded man, and left a large parcel of lint for the dressings. At length, on September 7th, four months, day by day, from the painful night on which he had been brought home dying to his grandfather, the physician declared that he could answer for him, and that convalescence was setting in. Marius, however, would be obliged to lie for two months longer on a couch, owing to the accidents produced by the fracture of the collar-bone. There is always a last wound like that which will not close, and eternizes the dressings, to the great annoyance of the patient. This long illness and lengthened convalescence, however, saved him from prosecution: in France there is no anger, even public, which six months do not extinguish. Riots, in the present state of society, are so much everybody's fault, that they are followed by a certain necessity of closing the eyes. Let us add that Gisquet's unjustifiable decree, which ordered physicians to denounce their patients having outraged opinion, and not merely opinion, but the king first of all, the wounded were covered and protected by this indignation, and, with the exception of those taken prisoners in the act of fighting, the courts-martial did not dare to molest any one. Hence Marius was left tranquil.

M. Gillenormand first passed through every form of agony, and then through every form of ecstasy. Equal difficulty was found in keeping him from passing the whole night by Marius'

side, he had his large easy chair brought to the bed ; and he insisted on his daughter taking the finest linen in the house to make compresses and bandages. Mademoiselle Gillenormand, as a sensible and elderly lady, managed to save the fine linen, while making her father believe that he was obeyed. M. Gillenormand would not listen to any explanation, that for the purpose of making lint fine linen is not so good as coarse, or new so good as worn. He was present at all the dressings, from which Mademoiselle Gillenormand modestly absented herself. When the dead flesh was cut away with scissors he said, Aïe, aïe ! Nothing was so touching as to see him hand the wounded man a cup of broth with his gentle senile trembling. He overwhelmed the surgeon with questions, and did not perceive that he constantly repeated the same. On the day when the physician informed him that Marius was out of danger he was beside himself. He gave his porter three louis d'or, and at night, when he went to his bed-room, danced a gavotte, making castagnettes of his thumb and forefinger, and sang a song something like this,—

Jeanne est née a Fougère,
Vrai nid d'une bergère ;
J'adore son jupon
Fripon.

Amour, tu vis en elle ;
Car c'est dans sa prunelle
Que tu mets ton carquois,
Narquois !

Moi, je la chante, et j'aime,
Plus que Diane même,
Jeanne et ses durs tetons
Bretons.

Then he knelt on a chair, and Basque, who was watching him through the crack of the door, felt certain that he was praying. Up to that day he had never believed in God. At each new phase in the improvement of the patient, which went on steadily, the grandfather was extravagant. He performed a multitude of mechanical actions full of delight : he went up and down-stairs without knowing why. A neighbour's wife, who was very pretty, by the way, was stupefied at receiving one morning a large bouquet : it was M. Gillenormand who sent it to her, and her husband got up a jealous scene. M. Gillenormand tried to draw Nicolette on his knees : he called Marius Monsieur le Baron, and shouted, Long live the Re-

public ! Every moment he asked the medical man, "There is no danger now, is there ?" He looked at Marius with a grandmother's eyes, and gloated over him when he slept. He no longer knew himself, no longer took himself into account. Marius was the master of the house, there was abdication in his joy, and he was the grandson of his grandson. In his present state of merriment he was the most venerable of children : through fear of wearying or annoying the convalescent he would place himself behind him in order to smile upon him. He was satisfied, joyous, ravished, charming, and young, and his white hair added a gentle majesty to the gay light which he had on his face. When grace is mingled with wrinkles it is adorable ; and there is a peculiar dawn in expansive old age.

As for Marius, while letting himself be nursed and petted, he had one fixed idea, Cosette. Since the fever and delirium had left him he no longer pronounced this name, and it might be supposed that he had forgotten it, but he was silent precisely because his soul was there. He knew not what had become of Cosette : the whole affair of the Rue de la Chanvrerie was like a cloud in his memory ; almost indistinct shadows floated in his mind. Eponine, Gavroche, Mabœuf, the Thénardiers, and all his friends, mournfully mingled with the smoke of the barricade, the strange passage of M. Fauchelevent through that blood-stained adventure, produced upon him the effect of an enigma in a tempest : he understood nothing of his own life, he knew not how or by whom he had been saved, and no one about him knew it either : all they were able to tell him was that he had been brought there at night in a hackney-coach : past, present, future, all this was to him like the mist of a vague idea ; but there was in this mist one immovable point, a clear and precise lineament, something made of granite, a resolution, a will—to find Cosette again. For him the idea of life was not distinct from the idea of Cosette : he had decreed in his heart that he would not receive one without the other, and he unalterably determined to demand of his grandfather, of destiny, of fate, of Hades itself, the restitution of his lost Eden.

He did not conceal the obstacles from himself. Here let us underline one fact : he was not won or greatly affected by all the anxiety and all the tenderness of his grandfather. In the first place he was not in the secret of them all, and next, in his sick man's reveries, which were perhaps still feverish, he distrusted this gentleness as a strange and new thing intended to subdue him. He remained cold to it, and the poor grandfather lavished his smiles in pure loss. Marius said to himself

that it was all very well so long as he did not speak and let matters rest, but when he came to Cosette, he should find another face, and his grandfather's real attitude would be unmasked. Then the affair would be rude; a warming up of family questions, a confrontation of position, every possible sarcasm and objection at once. Fauchelevent, Coupelevent, fortune, poverty, wretchedness, the stone on the neck, and the future, a violent resistance, and the conclusion,—a refusal. Marius stiffened himself against it beforehand. And then, in proportion as he regained life, his old wrongs re-appeared, the old ulcers of his memory re-opened; he thought again of the past. Colonel Pontmercy placed himself once more between M. Gillenormand and him, Marius, and he said to himself that he had no real kindness to hope for from a man who had been so unjust and harsh to his father. And with health came back a sort of bitterness against his grandfather, from which the old man gently suffered. M. Gillenormand, without letting it be seen, noticed that Marius, since he had been brought home and regained consciousness, had never once called him father. He did not say Sir, it is true, but he managed to say neither one nor the other, by a certain way of turning his sentences.

A crisis was evidently approaching, and, as nearly always happens in such cases, Marius, in order to try himself, skirmished before offering battle; this is called feeling the ground. One morning it happened that M. Gillenormand, alluding to a newspaper which he had come across, spoke lightly of the Convention, and darted a Royalist epigram at Danton, St Just, and Robespierre. "The men of '93 were giants," Marius said sternly; the old man was silent, and did not utter another syllable all the day. Marius, who had the inflexible grandfather of his early years ever present to his mind, saw in this silence a profound concentration of anger, augured from it an obstinate struggle, and augmented his preparations for the contest in the back nooks of his mind. He determined that in case of refusal he would tear off his bandages, dislocate his collar-bone, expose all the wounds still unhealed, and refuse all food. His wounds were his ammunition; he must have Cosette or die. He awaited the favourable moment with the crafty patience of sick persons, and the moment arrived.

CHAPTER LXII.

MARIUS ATTACKS.

ONE day M. Gillenormand, while his daughter was arranging the phials and cups on the marble slab of the side-board, leant over Marius, and said in his most tender accent,—

“Look you, my little Marius, in your place I would rather eat meat than fish; a fried sole is excellent at the beginning of a convalescence, but a good cutlet is necessary to put the patient on his legs.”

Marius, whose strength had nearly quite returned, sat up, rested his two clenched fists on his sheet, looked his grandfather in the face, assumed a terrible air, and said,—

“That induces me to say one thing to you.”

“What is it?”

“That I wish to marry.”

“Foreseen,” said the grandfather, bursting into a laugh.

“How foreseen?”

“Yes, foreseen. You shall have your little maid.”

Marius, stupefied and dazzled, trembled in all his limbs, and M. Gillenormand continued,—

“Yes, you shall have the pretty little dear. She comes every day in the form of an old gentleman to ask after you. Ever since you have been wounded she has spent her time in crying and making lint. I made inquiries; she lives at No. 7, Rue de l'Homme Armé. Ah! there we are! Ah, you want her, do you? well, you shall have her. There's a take-in for you; you had made your little plot, and had said to yourself, ‘I will tell it point-blank to that grandfather, that mummy of the Regency and the Directory, that old beau, that Dorante who has become Géronte; he has had his frolics too, and his amourettes, and his grisettes, and his Colettes; he has had his fling, he has had his wings, and he has eaten the bread of spring; he must surely remember it, we shall see. Battle!’ Ah, you take the cockchafer by the horns, very good. I offer you a cutlet, and you answer me, ‘By the by, I wish to marry.’ By Jupiter Ammon, that is a transition! Ah, you made up your mind for a quarrel, but you did not know that I was an old coward. What do you say to that? You are done, you did not expect to find your grandfather more stupid than yourself. You have

lost the speech you intended to make me, master lawyer, and that is annoying. Well, all the worse, rage away ; I do what you want, and that cuts the speech short, ass. Listen ! I have made my inquiries, for I too am cunning ; she is charming, she is virtuous, the Lancer does not speak the truth, she made heaps of lint. She is a jewel ; she adores you ; if you had died there would have been three of us, and her coffin would have accompanied mine. I had the idea so soon as you were better of planting her there by your bed-side, but it is only in romances that girls are introduced to the beds of handsome young wounded men in whom they take an interest. That would not do, for what would your aunt say ? You were quite naked three parts of the time, sir ; ask Nicolette, who never left you for a moment, whether it were possible for a female to be here ? And, then, what would the doctor have said ? for a pretty girl does not cure a fever. Well, say no more about it, it is settled and done, take her, such is my ferocity. Look you, I saw that you did not love me, and I said, ‘ What can I do to make that animal love me ? ’ I said, ‘ Stay, I have my little Cosette ready to hand. I will give her to him, and then he must love me a little, or tell me the reason why.’ Ah ! you believed that the old man would storm, talk big, cry no, and lift his cane against all this dawn. Not at all. Cosette, very good ; love, very good ; I ask for nothing better ; take the trouble, sir, to marry, be happy, my beloved child.”

After saying this the old man burst into sobs ; he took Marius’ head and pressed it to his old bosom, and both began weeping. That is one of the forms of supreme happiness.

“ My father ! ” Marius exclaimed.

“ Ah, you love me then ! ” the old man said.

There was an ineffable moment ; they were choking and could not speak ; at length the old man stammered,—

“ Come ! the stopper is taken out of him ; he called me father.”

Marius disengaged his head from his grandfather’s arms, and said, gently,—

“ Now that I am better, father, I fancy I could see her.”

“ Foreseen, too, you will see her to-morrow.”

“ Father ? ”

“ Well, what ? ”

“ Why not to-day ? ”

“ Well, to-day, done for to-day. You have called me father thrice, and it’s worth that. I will see about it, and she shall be brought here. Foreseen, I tell you. That has al-

ready been put in verse, and it is the denouement of André Chénier's elegy, the 'Jeune malade,' André Chénier who was butchered by the vill— by the giants of '93."

M. Gillenormand fancied he could see a slight frown on Marius' face, though, truth to tell, he was not listening, as he had flown away into ecstasy, and was thinking much more of Cosette than of 1793. The grandfather, trembling at having introduced André Chénier so inopportunely, hurriedly continued,—

"Butchered is not the word. The fact is that the great revolutionary geniuses who were not wicked, that is incontestable, who were heroes, Pardi, found that André Chénier was slightly in their way, and they had him guillo—that is to say, these great men on the 7th Thermidor, in the interest of the public safety, begged André Chénier to be kind enough to go—"

M. Gillenormand, garrotted by his own sentence, could not continue; unable to terminate it or retract it, the old man rushed, with all the speed which his age allowed, out of the bed-room, shut the door after him, and purple, choking, and foaming, with his eyes out of his head, found himself nose to nose with honest Basque, who was cleaning boots in the ante-room. He seized Basque by the collar, and furiously shouted into his face, "By the hundred thousand Javottes of the devil, those brigands assassinated him!"

"Whom, sir?"

"André Chénier."

"Yes, sir," said the horrified Basque.

CHAPTER LXIII.

MLLE. GILLENOORMAND HAS NO OBJECTIONS TO THE MATCH.

COSSETTE and Marius saw each other again. We will not attempt to describe the interview; for there are things which we must not attempt to paint: the sun is of the number. The whole family, Basque and Nicolette included, were assembled in Marius' chamber at the moment when Cosette entered. She appeared in the doorway, and seemed to be surrounded by a halo: precisely at the moment this grandfather was going to

blow his nose, but he stopped short, holding his nose in his handkerchief and looking over it.

"Adorable!" he cried.

And then he blew a sonorous blast. Cosette was intoxicated, ravished, startled, in heaven. She was as timid as a person can be through happiness; she stammered, turned pale, and then pink, and wished to throw herself into Marius' arms, but dared not. She was ashamed of loving before so many people; for the world is merciless to happy lovers, and always remains at the very moment when they most long to be alone. And yet they do not want these people at all. With Cosette, and behind her, had entered a white-haired man, serious, but still smiling, though the smile was wandering and poignant. It was "Monsieur Fauchelevent,"—it was Jean Valjean. He was *well-dressed*, as the porter had said, in a new black suit and a white cravat. The porter was a thousand leagues from recognizing in this correct citizen, this probable notary, the frightful corpse-bearer who had risen at the gate on the night of June 7th, ragged, filthy, hideous, and haggard, with a mask of blood and mud on his face, supporting in his arms the unconscious Marius; still his porter's instincts were aroused. When M. Fauchelevent arrived with Cosette the porter could not refrain from confiding this aside to his wife, "I don't know why, but I fancy that I have seen that face before." M. Fauchelevent remained standing by the door of Marius' room, as if afraid; he held under his arm a packet rather like an octavo volume wrapped in paper. The paper was green, apparently from mildew.

"Has this gentleman always got books under his arm like that?" Mademoiselle Gillenormand, who was not fond of books, asked Nicolette in a whisper.

"Well," M. Gillenormand, who had heard her, answered in the same key, "he is a savant, is that his fault? Monsieur Boulard, whom I knew, never went out without a book either, and had always got one close to his heart."

Then bowing, he said, in a loud voice,—

"M. Tranchelevent."

Father Gillenormand did not do it purposely, but an inattention to proper names was an aristocratic way of his.

"Monsieur Tranchelevent, I have the honour of requesting this lady's hand for my grandson, M. le Baron Marius Pontmercy?"

Monsieur "Tranchelevent" bowed.

"All right," the grandfather said.

And turning to Marius and Cosette, with both arms extended in benediction, he cried,—

“ You have leave to adore each other.”

They did not let it be said twice, and the prattling began. They talked in a whisper, Marius reclining on his couch and Cosette standing by his side. “ Oh, Heaven ! ” Cosette murmured, “ I see you again : it is you. To go and fight like that ! But why ? it is horrible. For four months I have been dead. Oh, how wicked it was of you to have been at that battle ! what had I done to you ? I forgive you, but you will not do it again. Just now, when they came to tell me to come to you, I thought again that I was going to die, but it was of joy. I was so sad ! I did not take the time to dress myself, and I must look frightful ; what will your relations say at seeing me in a tumbled collar ? But speak ! you let me speak all alone. We are still in the Rue de l’ Homme Armé. It seems that your shoulder was terrible, and I was told that I could put my hand in it, and then it seems that your flesh was cut with scissors. How frightful that is ! I wept so that I have no eyes left. It is strange that a person can suffer like that. Your grandfather has a very kind look. Do not disturb yourself, do not get on your elbow like that, or you will do yourself an injury. Oh ! how happy I am ! So our misfortunes are all ended ! I am quite foolish. There were things I wanted to say to you which I have quite forgotten. Do you love me still ? We live in the Rue de l’ Homme Armé. There is no garden there. I made lint the whole time ; look here, sir, it is your fault, my fingers are quite rough.”

“ Angel ! ” said Marius.

Angel is the only word in the language which cannot be worn out ; no other word would resist the pitiless use which lovers make of it. Then, as there was company present, they broke off, and did not say a word more, contenting themselves with softly clasping hands. M. Gillenormand turned to all the rest in the room, and cried,—

“ Speak loudly, good people ; make a noise, will you. Come, a little row, hang it all, so that these children may prattle at their ease.”

And going up to Marius and Cosette, he whispered to them,—

“ Go on ; don’t put yourselves out of the way.”

Aunt Gillenormand witnessed with stupor this irruption of light into her antiquated house. This stupor had nothing aggressive about it ; it was not at all the scandalized and envious glance cast by an owl at two ring-doves : it was the stupid eye

of a poor innocent of the age of fifty-seven ; it was a spoiled life looking at that triumph, love.

"Mademoiselle Gillenormand the elder," her father said to her, "I told you that this would happen."

He remained silent for a moment, and added,—

"Look at the happiness of others."

Then he turned to Cosette.

"How pretty she is ! how pretty she is ! she is a Grouze ! So you are going to have all that for yourself, scamp ? Ah, my boy, you have had a lucky escape from me ; for if I were not fifteen years too old we would fight with swords and see who should have her. There, I am in love with you, Mademoiselle ; but it is very simple, it is your right. What a famous, charming little wedding we will have ! Saint Denis du Saint-Sacrement is our parish ; but I will procure a dispensation, so that you may be married at St Paul, for the church is better. It was built for the Jesuits, and more coquettish. It is opposite Cardinal Birague's fountain. The masterpiece of Jesuit architecture is at Namur, and is called Saint Loup ; you should go and see that when you are married, for it is worth the journey. Mademoiselle, I am entirely of your opinion ; I wish girls to marry, for they are made for it. There is a certain Sainte Catharine, whom I would always like to see uncovered. To remain a maid is fine, but it is cold. Multiply, says the Bible. To save the people a Joan of Arc is wanted ; but to make a people we want Mother Gigogne. So marry, my darlings ; I really do not see the use of remaining a maid. I know very well that they have a separate chapel in church, and join the confraternity of the virgin ; but, sapristi, a good-looking young husband, and at the end of a year a plump bantling, who sucks at you bravely, and who has rolls of fat on his thighs, and who clutches your bosom with his pink little paws, are a good deal better than holding a candle at vespers and singing *Turris Eburnea*."

The grandfather pirouetted on his nonagenarian heels, and began speaking again, like a spring which has been wound up.

Ainsi, bornant le cours de tes rêvasseries,
Alcippe, il est donc vrai, dans peu tu te maries.

"By the by ?"

"What, father ?"

"Had you not an intimate friend ?"

"Yes, Courfeyrac."

"What has become of him ?"

"He is dead ?"

"That is well."

He sat down by their side, made Cosette take a chair, and took their four hands in his old wrinkled hands.

"This darling is exquisite. This Cosette is a masterpiece! She is a very little girl and a very great lady. She will be only a baroness, and that is a derogation, for she is born to be a marchioness. What eye-lashes she has! My children, drive it into your noddles that you are on the right road. Love one another; be foolish over it, for love is the stupidity of men and the cleverness of God. So adore one another. Still," he added, suddenly growing sad, "what a misfortune! more than half I possess is sunk in annuities; so long as I live it will be all right, but when I am dead, twenty years hence, ah! my poor children, you will not have a farthing. Your pretty white hands, Madame la Baronne, will be wrinkled by work."

Here a serious and calm voice was heard saying,—

"Mademoiselle Euphrasie Fauchelevent has six hundred thousand francs."

It was Jean Valjean's voice. He had not yet uttered a syllable; no one seemed to remember that he was present, and he stood motionless behind all these happy people.

"Who is the Mademoiselle Euphrasie in question?" the startled grandfather asked.

"Myself," said Cosette.

"Six hundred thousand francs!" M. Gillenormand repeated.

"Less fourteen or fifteen thousand, perhaps," Jean Valjean said.

And he laid on the table the parcel which Aunt Gillenormand had taken for a book. Jean Valjean himself opened the packet; it was a bundle of bank-notes. They were turned over and counted; there were six hundred bank-notes for a thousand francs, and one hundred and sixty-eight for five hundred, forming a total of five hundred and eighty-four thousand francs.

"That's a famous book," said M. Gillenormand.

"Five hundred and eighty-four thousand francs!" the aunt murmured.

"That arranges a good many things, does it not, Mademoiselle Gillenormand the elder?" the grandfather continued. "That devil of a Marius has found a millionnaire grisette upon the tree of dreams! Now trust to the amourettes of young people! Students find studentesses with six hundred thousand francs. Cherubin works better than Rothschild."

"Five hundred and eighty-four thousand francs!" Mademoiselle Gillenormand repeated; "five hundred and eighty-four

thousand francs! we may as well say six hundred thousand."

As for Marius and Cosette, they were looking at each other during this period, and hardly paid any attention to the circumstances.

Of course our readers have understood, and no lengthened explanation will be required, that Jean Valjean after the Champmathieu affair was enabled by his escape for a few days to come to Paris, and withdraw in time from Laffitte's the sum he had gained under the name of M. Madeleine at M.-sur-M. ; and that, afraid of being re-captured, which in fact happened to him shortly after, he buried this sum in the forest of Montfermeil, at the spot called the Blaru bottom. The sum, six hundred and thirty thousand francs, all in bank-notes, occupied but little space, and was contained in a box ; but in order to protect the box from damp he placed it in an oak coffer filled with chips of chestnut-wood. In the same coffer he placed his other treasure, the Bishop's candlesticks. It will be remembered that he carried off these candlesticks in his escape from M.-sur-M—. The man seen on one previous evening by Boulatruelle was Jean Valjean, and afterwards, whenever Jean Valjean required money, he fetched it from the Blaru clearing, and hence his absences to which we have referred. He had a pick concealed somewhere in the shrubs, in a hiding-place known to himself alone. When he found Marius to be convalescent, feeling that the hour was at hand when this money might be useful, he went to fetch it ; and it was also he whom Boulatruelle saw in the wood, but this time in the morning, and not at night. Boulatruelle inherited the pick.

The real sum was five hundred and eighty-four thousand five hundred francs, but Jean Valjean kept back the five hundred francs for himself. "We will see afterwards," he thought. The difference between this sum and the six hundred and thirty thousand francs withdrawn from Laffitte's represented the expenditure of ten years from 1823 to 1833. The five years' residence in the convent had only cost five thousand francs. Jean Valjean placed the two silver candlesticks on the mantel-piece, where they glistened, to the great admiration of Toussaint. Moreover, Jean Valjean knew himself freed from Javert ; it had been stated in his presence, and he verified the fact in the *Moniteur* which had published it, that an Inspector of Police of the name of Javert had been found drowned under a washer-woman's boat between the Pont-au-change and the Pont-Neuf, and that a letter left by this man, hitherto irreproachable and highly esteemed by his chiefs, led to the belief in an attack of

dementia and suicide. "In truth," thought Jean Valjean, "since he let me go when he had hold of me he must have been mad at that time."

CHAPTER LXIV.

THE OLD MEN RENDER COSETTE HAPPY.

ALL preparations were made for the marriage, and the physician, on being consulted, declared that it might take place in February. It was now December, and a few ravishing weeks of perfect happiness slipped away. The least happy man was not the grandfather, he sat for a whole quarter of an hour contemplating Cosette.

"The admirably pretty girl!" he would exclaim, "and she has so soft and kind an air! She is the most charming creature I have ever seen in my life. Presently she will have virtues with a violet scent. She is one of the Graces, on my faith! A man can only live nobly with such a creature. Marius, my lad, you are a baron, you are rich, so do not be a pettifogger, I implore you."

Cosette and Marius had suddenly passed from the sepulchre into paradise: the transition had not been prepared, and they would have been stunned if they had not been dazzled.

"Do you understand anything of all this?" Marius would say to Cosette.

"No," Cosette answered, "but it seems to me as if le bon Dieu were looking at us."

Jean Valjean did everything, smoothed everything, conciliated everything, and rendered everything easy. He hurried toward Cosette's happiness with as much eagerness and apparently with as much joy as Cosette herself. As he had been Mayor, he was called to solve a delicate problem, the secret of which he alone possessed,—the civil status of Cosette. To tell her origin openly might have prevented the marriage, but he got Cosette out of all the difficulties. He arranged for her a family of dead people, a sure method of not incurring any inquiry. Cosette was the only one left of an extinct family. Cosette was not his daughter, but the daughter of another Fauchelevent. Two brothers Fauchelevent had been gardeners at the convent of the Little Picpus: they went to this convent; the best testimonials

and most satisfactory character were given ; for the good nuns, little suited, and but little inclined to solve questions of paternity, had never known exactly of which of the two Fauchelevents Cosette was the daughter. They said what was wanted, and said it zealously. An act of notoriety was drawn up, and Cosette became by law Mademoiselle Euphrasie Fauchelevent, and was declared an orphan both on the father's and mother's side. Jean Valjean managed so as to be designated, under the name of Fauchelevent, as guardian of Cosette, with M. Gillenormand as supervising guardian. As for the five hundred and eighty-four thousand francs, they were a legacy left to Cosette by a dead person who wished to remain unknown : the original legacy had been five hundred and ninety-four thousand francs, but ten thousand had been spent in the education of Mademoiselle Euphrasie, five thousand of which had been paid to the convent. This legacy, deposited in the hands of a third party, was to be handed over to Cosette upon her majority, or at the period of her marriage. All this was highly acceptable, as we see, especially when backed up by more than half a million francs. There were certainly a few singular points here and there, but they were not seen, for one of the persons interested had his eyes bandaged by love, and the others by the six hundred thousand francs.

Cosette learned that she was not the daughter of the old man whom she had so long called father ; he was only a relation, and another Fauchelevent was her real father. At another moment this would have grieved her, but in the ineffable hour she had now reached it was only a slight shadow, a passing cloud ; and she had so much joy that this cloud lasted but a short time. She had Marius : the young man came, the old man disappeared ; life is so. And then, Cosette had been accustomed for many long years to see enigmas around her ; every being who has had a mysterious childhood is ever ready for certain renunciations. Still she continued to call Jean Valjean "father." Cosette, who was among the angels, was enthusiastic about Father Gillenormand ; it is true that he overwhelmed her with madrigals and presents. While Jean Valjean was constructing for Cosette an unassailable position in society, M. Gillenormand attended to the wedding trousseau. Nothing amused him so much as to be magnificent ; and he had given Cosette a gown of Binche guipure, which he inherited from his own grandmother. "These fashions spring up again," he said, "antiquities are the great demand, and the young ladies of my old days dress themselves like the old ladies of my youth." He plundered his respectable round-bellied commodes of Coromandel lacquer, which had

not been opened for years. "Let us shrive these dowagers," he said, "and see what they have in their paunch." He noisily violated drawers full of the dresses of all his wives, all his mistresses, and all his female ancestry. He lavished on Cosette, Chinese satins, damasks, lampas, painted moires, gros de Naples dresses, Indian handkerchiefs embroidered with gold that can be washed, Genoa and Alençon point lace, sets of old jewelry, ivory bonbon boxes adorned with microscopic battles, laces, and ribbons. Cosette, astounded, wild with love for Marius and with gratitude to M. Gillenormand, dreamed of an unbounded happiness, dressed in satin and velvet. Her wedding-basket seemed to her supported by seraphim, and her soul floated in ether with wings of Mechlin lace. The intoxication of the lovers was only equalled, as we stated, by the ecstasy of the grandfather, and there was something like a flourish of trumpets in the Rue des Filles du Calvaire. Each morning there was a new offering of *bric-à-brac* from the grandfather to Cosette, and all sorts of ornaments were spread out splendidly around her. One day Marius, who was fond of talking seriously through his happiness, said, with reference to some incident which I have forgotten,—

"The men of the revolution are so great that they already possess the prestige of centuries, like Cato and like Phocion, and each of them seems an ancient memory" (*mémoire antique*).

"'Moire antique!'" exclaimed the old gentleman, "thank you, Marius, that is the very idea which I was seeking for."

And on the morrow a splendid tea-coloured moire antique dress was added to Cosette's outfit. The grandfather extracted a wisdom from this frippery :—

"Love is all very well, but this is required with it. Something useless is required in happiness; happiness is only what is absolutely necessary, but season it, say I, with an enormous amount of superfluity. A palace and her heart; her heart and the Louvre. Give me my shepherdess, and try that she be a duchess. Bring me Phillis crowned with corn-flowers, and add to her one thousand francs a year. Open for me an endless Bucolic under a marble colonnade. I consent to the Bucolic and also to the fairy scene in marble and gold. Dry happiness resembles dry bread; you eat it, but you do not dine. I wish for superfluity, for the useless, for extravagance, for that which is of no use. I remember to have seen in Strasburg Cathedral a clock as tall as a three-storeyed house, which marked the hour, which had the kindness to mark the hour, but did not look as if it was made for the purpose: and which, after striking midday or midnight, midday,—the hour of the sun, and mid-

night, the hour of love, or any other hour you please,—gave you the moon and the stars, earth and sea, birds and fishes, Phœbus and Phœbe, and a heap of things that came out of a corner, and the twelve apostles, and the Emperor Charles V., and Eponine, and Sabinus, and a number of little gilt men, who played the trumpet, into the bargain, without counting the ravishing chimes which it scattered in the air on every possible occasion, without your knowing why. Is a wretched naked clock, which only marks the hours, worth that? I am of the opinion of the great clock of Strasburg, and prefer it to the Black Forest cuckoo clock."

M. Gillenormand talked all sorts of nonsense about the marriage, and all the ideas of the eighteenth century passed pell-mell into his dithyrambs.

" You are ignorant of the art of festivals, and do not know how to get up a day's pleasure in these times," he exclaimed. " Your nineteenth century is soft, and is deficient in excess: it is ignorant of what is rich and noble. In everything it is close-shorn. Your third estate is insipid and has no colour, smell, or shape. The dream of your bourgeois who establish themselves, as they call it, is a pretty boudoir freshly decorated with mahogany and calico. Make way, there! the Sieur Grigou marries the Demoiselle Grippesou. Sumptuousness and splendour. A louis d'or has been stuck to a wax candle. Such is the age. I insist on flying beyond the Sarmatians. Ah, so far back as 1787 I predicted that all was lost on the day when I saw the Duc de Rohan, Prince de Léon, Duc de Chabot, Duc de Montbazon, Marquis de Soubise, Vicomte de Thouars, and Peer of France, go to Longchamps in a *tapecul*: that bore its fruits. In this century men have a business, gamble on the Stock Exchange, win money, and are mean. They take care of and varnish their surface: they are carefully dressed, washed, soaped, shaved, combed, rubbed, brushed, and cleaned externally, irreproachable, as polished as a pebble, discreet, trim, and at the same time, virtue of my soul! they have at the bottom of their conscience dungheaps and cesspools, at which a milkmaid who blows her nose with her fingers would recoil. I grant the present age this motto,—dirty cleanliness. Marius, do not be annoyed; grant me the permission to speak, for I have been saying no harm of the people, you see. I have my mouth full of your people, but do let me give the bourgeoisie a pill. I tell you point blank that at the present day people marry, but no longer know how to marry. Ah, it is true, I regret the gentility of the old manners; I regret everything; that elegance, that chivalry, that courteous and dainty

manner, that rejoicing luxury which every one possessed, the music forming part of the wedding, symphony above and marrow-bones and cleavers below-stairs, the joyous faces seated at table, the spicy madrigals, the songs, the fireworks, the hearty laugh, the devil and his train, and the large ribbon bows. I regret the bride's garter, for it is first cousin of the girdle of Venus. On what does the siege of Troy turn? Parbleu, on Helen's garter. Why do men fight? Why does the divine Diomedes smash on the head of Merioneus that grand brass helmet, with the ten points? Why do Achilles and Hector tickle each other with lances? Because Helen let Paris take her garter. With Cosette's garter Homer would write the *Iliad*; he would place in his poem an old chatterer like myself, and call him Nestor. My friends, in former times, in those amiable former times, people married learnedly: they made a good contract and then a good merry-making. So soon as Cujas had gone out, Gamacho came in. Hang it all! the stomach is an agreeable beast, that demands its due, and wishes to hold its wedding too. We supped well, and had at table a pretty neighbour without a neckerchief, who only concealed her throat moderately. Oh, the wide laughing mouths, and how gay people were in those days! Youth was a bouquet, every young man terminated in a branch of lilac or a posy of roses; if he were a warrior, he wore a shepherd, and if by chance he were a captain of dragoons, he managed to call himself Florian. All were anxious to be pretty fellows, and they wore embroidery and rouge. A bourgeois looked like a flower, and a marquis like a precious stone. They did not wear straps, they did not wear boots; they were flashing, lustrous, gilt, light, dainty, and coquettish, but it did not prevent them wearing a sword by their side; they were humming birds with beak and nails. It was the time of the *Indes galantes*. One of the sides of that age was delicate, the other magnificent and by the vertuchoux, people amused themselves. At the present day folk are serious; the bourgeois is miserly, the bourgeois prudish, and your age is out of shape. The grave would be expelled because their dresses were cut too low in the neck. Alas! beauty is concealed as an ugliness. Since the revolution all wear trowsers, even the ballet girls; a ballet girl must be serious, and your rigadoons are doctrinaire. A man must be majestic, and would feel very much annoyed at not having his chin in his cravat. The idea of a scamp of twenty, who is about to marry, is to resemble Monsieur Royes-collard. And do you know what people reach by this majesty? they are little. Learn this fact: joy is not merely

joyous, it is grand. Be amorous gaily, though, hang it all ! marry, when you do marry, with fever and amazement and row and the *tohu-bohu* of happiness. Gravity at church, if you will ; but so soon as the mass is ended, *sarpejon*, you ought to make a dream whirl round your wife. A marriage ought to be royal and chimerical, and promenade its ceremony from the Cathedral of Rheims to the Pagoda of Chanteloup. I have a horror of a scrubby marriage. *Ventregoulette !* be an Olympus at least upon that day. Be gods. Ah, people might be sylphs. Games and laughter, *Argyrapspides*, but they are scrubs : my friends, every newly-married man ought to be Prince Aldobrandini. Take advantage of this unique moment of life to fly into the Empyrean with the swans and the eagles, even if you fall back to-morrow into the bourgeoisie of frogs. Do not save upon the hymeneal rites ; do not nibble at this splendour, nor split farthings on the day when you are radiant. A wedding is not housekeeping. Oh, if I had my way it should be a gallant affair, and violins should be heard in the trees. Here is my programme : sky-blue and silver. I would mingle in the *fête* the rustic divinities, and convene the Dryads and the Nereids. The wedding of Amphitrite, a pink cloud, nymphs with their hair carefully dressed and quite nude, an academician offering quatrains to the Deess, a car drawn by marine monsters.

Triton trottait devant, et tirait de sa conque,
Des sons si ravissants qu'il ravissait quiconque !

There is a programme for a *fête*, or I'm no judge, *sac à papier !*"

While the grandfather, in the heat of his lyric effusion, was listening to himself, Cosette and Marius were intoxicating themselves by looking freely at each other. Aunt Gillenormand regarded all this with her imperturbable placidity ; she had, during the last five or six months, a certain amount of emotions ; Marius returned, Marius brought back bleeding, Marius brought from a barricade, Marius dead, then living, Marius reconciled, Marius affianced, Marius marrying a poor girl, Marius marrying a millionaire. The six hundred thousand francs had been her last surprise, and then her indifference as first communiant returned to her. She went regularly to her mass, told her beads, read her euchology, whispered in one corner of the house her *Aves*, while "*I love you*" was being whispered in another, and saw Marius and Cosette vaguely like two shadows. The shadow was herself. There is a certain state of inert asceticism in which the mind, neutralized by torpor, and

a stranger to what might be called the business of living, does not perceive, with the exception of earthquakes and catastrophes, any human impressions, either pleasant or painful. "This devotion," Father Gillenormand would say to his daughter, "resembles a cold in the head; you smell nothing of life, neither a good odour nor a bad one." However, the six hundred thousand francs had settled the old maid's indecision. Her father was accustomed to take her so little into account that he had not consulted her as to the consent to Marius' marriage. He had acted impetuously, according to his wont, having, as a despot who had become a slave, but one thought, that of satisfying Marius. As for the aunt, he had scarce remembered that the aunt existed, and that she might have an opinion of her own, and, sheep though she was, this had offended her. Somewhat roused internally, but externally impassive, she said to herself, "My father settles the marriage question without me, and I will settle the question of the inheritance without him." She was rich, in fact, and her father was not so, and it is probable that if the marriage had been poor she would have left it poor. "All the worse for my nephew! if he choose to marry a beggar, he may be a beggar too." But Cosette's half-a-million of francs pleased the aunt and changed her feelings with respect to the loving couple; consideration is due to six hundred thousand francs, and it was evident that she could not do otherwise than leave her fortune to these young people, because they no longer required it.

It was arranged that the couple should reside at M. Gillenormand's, and the grandfather insisted on giving them his bed-room, the finest room in the house. "*It will make me younger,*" he declared. "*It is an old place. I always had the idea that the wedding should take place in my room.*" He furnished this room with a heap of old articles of gallantry; he had it hung with an extraordinary fabric which he had in the piece, and believed to be Utrecht, a gold satin ground with velvet auriculas. "It was with that stuff," he said, "that the bed of the Duchess d'Anville à la Rocheguyon was hung." He placed on the mantel-piece a figure in Saxon porcelain carrying a muff on its naked stomach. M. Gillenormand's library became the office which Marius required, for an office, it will be borne in mind, is insisted upon by the council of the order.

CHAPTER LXV.

TWO MEN IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND.

THE lovers saw each other daily; and Cosette came with M. Fauchelevent. "It is turning things topsy-turvy," said Mademoiselle Gillenormand, "that the lady should come to the gentleman's house to have court paid to her in that way." But Marius' convalescence had caused the adoption of the habit, and the easy chairs of the Rue des Filles du Calvaire, more convenient for a *tête-à-tête* than the straw-bottomed chairs of the Rue de l'Homme Armé, had decided it. Marius and M. Fauchelevent saw each other, but did not speak, and this seemed to be agreed on. Every girl needs a chaperon, and Cosette could not have come without M. Fauchelevent; and for Marius, M. Fauchelevent was the condition of Cosette, and he accepted him. In discussing vaguely, and without any precision, political matters as connected with the improvement of all, they managed to say a little more than Yes and No. Once, on the subject of instruction, which Marius wished to be gratuitous and obligatory, multiplied in every form, lavished upon all like light and air, and, in a word, respirable by the entire people, they were agreed, and almost talked. Marius remarked on this occasion that M. Fauchelevent spoke well, and even with a certain elevation of language, though something was wanting. M. Fauchelevent had something less than a man of the world, and something more. Marius, in his innermost thoughts, surrounded with all sorts of questions this M. Fauchelevent, who was to him simple, well-wishing, and cold. At times doubts occurred to him as to his own recollections; he had a hole in his memory, a black spot, an abyss dug by four months of agony. Many things were lost in it, and he was beginning to ask himself whether it was the fact that he had seen M. Fauchelevent, a man so serious and so calm, at the barricade.

This was, however, not the sole stupor, which the appearances and disappearances of the past had left in his mind. We must not believe that he was delivered from all those promptings of memory which compel us, even when happy and satisfied, to take a melancholy backward glance. The head which does not turn to effaced horizons contains neither thought nor love. At moments Marius buried his face in his hands, and the tumultuous and vague past traversed the fog which he had in his brain. He saw Mabœuf fall again, he heard Gavroche

singing under the grape-shot, and he felt on his lips the coldness of Eponine's forehead; Enjolras, Courfeyrac, Jean Prouvaire, Combeferre, Bossuet, Grantaire, all his friends rose before him, and then disappeared. Were all these dear, dolorous, valiant, charming, and tragic beings, dreams? had they really existed? The riot had robed everything in its smoke, and these great fevers have great dreams. He questioned himself, he felt himself, and had a dizziness from all these vanished realities. Where were they all, then? was it really true that everything was dead? a fall into the darkness had carried away everything, except himself; all this had disappeared as it were behind the curtain of a theatre. There are such curtains which drop on life, and GOD passes on to the next act. In himself was he really the same man? He, poor, was rich; he, the abandoned man, had a family; he, the desperate man, was going to marry Cosette. He seemed to have passed through a tomb, and that he had gone in black and come out white. And in this tomb the others had remained. At certain times all these beings of the past, returning and present, formed a circle round him, and rendered him gloomy. Then he thought of Cosette, and became serene again, but it required no less than this felicity to efface this catastrophe. M. Fauchelevent had almost a place among these vanished beings. Marius hesitated to believe that the Fauchelevent of the barricade was the same as that Fauchelevent in flesh and bone, so gravely seated by the side of Cosette. The first was probably one of those nightmares brought to him and carried away by his hours of delirium. However, as their two natures were scarped, it was impossible for Marius to ask any question of M. Fauchelevent. The idea had not even occurred to him, we have already indicated this characteristic detail. Two men who have a common secret, and who, by a sort of tacit agreement, do not exchange a syllable on the subject, are not so rare as may be supposed. Once, however, Marius made an effort; he turned the conversation on the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and turning to M. Fauchelevent, he said to him,—

“Do you know that street well?”

“What street?”

“The Rue de la Chanvrerie.”

“I have never heard the name of that street,” M. Fauchelevent said, in the most natural tone in the world.

The answer, which related to the name of the street, and not to the street itself, seemed to Marius more conclusive than it really was.

“Decidedly,” he thought, “I must have been dreaming.

I had an hallucination. It was some one that resembled him, and M. Fauchelevant was not there."

The enchantment, great though it was, did not efface other thoughts from Marius' mind. While the marriage arrangements were being made, and the fixed period was waited for, he made some difficult and scrupulous retrospective researches. He owed gratitude in several quarters, he owed it for his father, and he owed it for himself. There was Thénardier, and there was the stranger who had brought him back to M. Gillenormand's. Marius was anxious to find these two men again, as he did not wish to marry, be happy, and forget them, and feared lest these unpaid debts of honour might cast a shadow over his life, which would henceforth be so luminous. It was impossible for him to leave all these arrears suffering behind him, and he wished, ere he entered joyously into the future, to obtain a receipt from the past. That Thénardier was a villain took nothing from the fact that he had saved Colonel Pontmercy. Thénardier was a bandit for all the world excepting for Marius. And Marius, ignorant of the real scene on the battle-field of Waterloo, did not know this peculiarity, that his father stood to Thénardier in the strange situation of owing him life without owing him gratitude. Not one of the agents whom Marius employed could find Thénardier's trail, and the disappearance seemed complete on that side. Mother Thénardier had died in prison before trial, and Thénardier and his daughter Azelma, the only two left of this lamentable group, had plunged again into the shadow. The gulf of the social unknown had silently closed again upon these beings. No longer could be seen on the surface that quivering, that tremor, and those obscure concentric circles which announce that something has fallen there, and that a grappling-iron may be thrown in.

Mother Thénardier being dead, Boulatruelle being out of the question, Claqueus having disappeared, and the principal accused having escaped from prison, the trial for the trap in the Gorbeau attic had pretty nearly failed. The affair had remained rather dark, and the assize court had been compelled to satisfy itself with two subalterns, Panchaud, *alias* Printanier, *alias* Bigrenaille, and Demi-Liard, *alias* Deux Milliards, who had been condemned contradictorily to the galleys fourteen years. Penal servitude for life was passed against their accomplices who had escaped; Thénardier, as chief and promoter, was condemned to death, also in default. This condemnation was the only thing that remained of Thénardier, casting on this buried name its sinister gleam, like a candle by the side of a

coffin. However, this condemnation, by thrusting Thénardier back into the lowest depths through the fear of being recaptured, added to the dense gloom which covered this man.

As for the other, the unknown man who had saved Marius, the researches had at first some result, and then stopped short. They succeeded in finding again the hackney-coach which had brought Marius to the Rue des Filles du Calvaire on the night of June 6. The driver declared that on the 6th June, by the order of a police agent, he had stopped from three P.M. till night-fall on the quay of the Champs Elysées, above the opening of the great sewer ; that at about nine in the evening the gate of the sewer which looks upon the river-bank opened ; that a man came out, bearing on his shoulders another man, who appeared to be dead ; that the agent, who was watching at this point, had arrested the living man, and seized the dead man ; that he, the coachman, had taken "all these people" into his hackney-coach ; that they drove first to the Rue des Filles du Calvaire, and deposited the dead man there ; that the dead man was M. Marius, and that he, the coachman, recognized him thoroughly, though he was alive this time ; that afterwards they got into his coach again, and a few yards from the gate of the Archives he was ordered to stop ; that he was paid in the street and discharged, and the agent took away the other man ; that he knew nothing more, and that the night was very dark. Marius, as we said, remembered nothing. He merely remembered that he had been seized from behind by a powerful hand at the moment when he fell backwards from the barricade, and then all was effaced for him. He had only regained his senses when he was at M. Gillenormand's.

He lost himself in conjectures ; he could not doubt as to his own identity, but how was it that he, who had fallen in the Rue de la Chanvrerie, had been picked up by the police agent on the bank of the Seine, near the bridge of the Invalides ? Some one had brought him from the quarter of the Halles to the Champs Elysées, and how ? by the sewer ? Extraordinary devotion ! Some one ? who ? it was the man whom Marius was seeking. Of this man, who was his saviour, he could find nothing, not a trace, not the slightest sign. Marius, though compelled on this side to exercise a great reserve, pushed on his inquiries as far as the Prefecture of Police, but there the information which he obtained led to no better result than elsewhere. The Prefecture knew less about the matter than the driver of the hackney-coach ; they had no knowledge of any arrest having taken place at the outlet of the great drain on June 6 ; they had received no report from the agent about this

fact which, at the Prefecture, was regarded as a fable. The invention of this fable was attributed to the driver; for a driver anxious for drink-money is capable of anything, even imagination. The fact, however, was certain, and Marius could not doubt it, unless he doubted his own identity, as we have just said. Everything in this strange enigma was inexplicable; this man, this mysterious man, whom the driver had seen come out of the grating of the great drain, bearing the fainting Marius on his back, and whom the police agent caught in the act of saving an insurgent,—what had become of him? what had become of the agent himself? why had this agent kept silence? had the man succeeded in escaping? had he corrupted the agent? why did this man give no sign of life to Marius, who owed everything to him? the disinterestedness was no less prodigious than the devotion. Why did this man not re-appear? perhaps he was above reward, but no man is above gratitude. Was he dead? who was the man? what face had he? No one was able to say; the driver replied,—“The night was very dark.” Basque and Nicolette in their start had only looked at their young master, who was all bloody. The porter, whose candle had lit up Marius’ tragic arrival, had alone remarked the man in question, and this was the description he gave of him, “The man was frightful.”

In the hope of deriving some advantage from them for his researches, Marius kept his blood-stained clothes which he wore when he was brought to his grandfather’s. On examining the coat it was noticed that the skirt was strangely torn, and a piece was necessary. One evening Marius was speaking in the presence of Cosette and Jean Valjean about all this singular adventure, the countless inquiries he had made, and the inutility of his efforts; Monsieur Fauchelevent’s cold face offended him, and he exclaimed with a vivacity which had almost the vibration of anger,—

“Yes, that man, whoever he may be, was sublime. Do you know what he did, sir? He intervened like an archangel. He was obliged to throw himself into the midst of the contest, carry me away, open the sewer, drag me off, and carry me. He must have gone more than a league and a half through frightful subterranean galleries, bent and bowed in the darkness, in the sewer, for more than half a league, sir, with a corpse on his back! And for what object? for the sole object of saving that corpse, and that corpse was myself. He said to himself,—‘There is, perhaps, a gleam of life left here, and I will risk my existence for this wretched spark!’ and he did not risk his existence once, but twenty times! and each step was a danger,

and the proof is, that on leaving the sewer, he was arrested. Do you know, sir, that this man did all that? and he had no reward to expect. Who was I? An insurgent. Who was I? A conquered man. Oh! if Cosette's six thousand francs were mine—”

“ They are yours,” Jean Valjean interrupted.

“ Well, then,” Marius continued, “ I would give them to find that man again.”

Jean Valjean was silent.

CHAPTER LXVI.

FEBRUARY 16, 1833.

THE night of February 16th was a blessed night, for it had above its shadow the open sky. It was the wedding-night of Marius and Cosette. The day had been adorable; it was not the adorable blue feast dreamed of by the grandfather, a fairy scene, with a confusion of cherubims and cupids above the head of the married couple, a marriage worthy of being represented over a door; but it had been sweet and smiling. The fashion of marrying in 1833 was not at all as it is now. France had not yet borrowed from England that supreme delicacy of carrying off the wife, flying on leaving the church, hiding oneself as if ashamed of one's happiness, and combining the manœuvres of a bankrupt with the ravishment of the Song of Songs. We had not yet understood how chaste, exquisite, and decent it is to jolt one's paradise in a post-chaise, to vary the mystery with clic-clacs of the whip; to select an inn bed as the nuptial couch, and to leave behind one, at the conventional alcove at so much per night, the most sacred recollection of life, pell-mell with the *tête-à-têtes* of the guard of the diligence and the chamber-maid. In the second half of the nineteenth century, in which we now are, the mayor and his scarf, the priest and his chasuble, the law and God, are no longer sufficient; they must be complemented by the postilion of Longjumeau; blue jacket with red facings and bell buttons, a leather-bound plate, green leather breeches, oaths to the Norman horses with their knotted tails, false aiguillettes, oil-skin hat, heavy, dusty horses, an enormous whip, and strong boots. France does not carry the elegance to such an extent as to

shower on the post-chaise, as the English nobility do, old shoes and battered slippers, in memory of Churchill, afterwards Marlborough or Malbrouck, who was assailed on his wedding-day by the anger of an aunt which brought him good luck. Shoes and slippers do not yet form part of our nuptial celebrations; but, patience, with the spread of good taste, we shall yet come to it.

In 1833, that is to say, one hundred years ago, marriage was not performed at a smart trot; people still supposed at that epoch, whimsically enough, that a marriage is a private and social festival, that a patriarchal banquet does not spoil a domestic solemnity; that gaiety, even if it be excessive, so long as it is decent, does no harm to happiness; and, finally, that it is venerable and good for the fusion of these two destinies from which a family will issue, to begin in the house, and that the household may have in future the nuptial chamber as a witness. And people were so immodest as to marry at home. The wedding took place, then, according to this fashion which is now antiquated, at M. Gillenormand's; and though this affair of marrying is so simple and natural, the publication of the banns, drawing up the deeds, the mayoralty, and the church, always cause some complication, and they could not be ready before February 16th. Now—we note this detail for the pure satisfaction of being exact—it happened that the 16th was Shrove Tuesday. There were hesitations and scruples, especially on the part of Aunt Gillenormand.

"A Shrove Tuesday!" the grandfather exclaimed; "all the better. There is a proverb that

'Mariage un Mardi gras
N'aura point d'enfants ingrats.'

All right. Done for the 16th. Do you wish to put it off, Marius?"

"Certainly not," said the amorous youth.

"We'll marry then," said the grandfather.

The marriage, therefore, took place on the 16th, in spite of the public gaiety. It rained on that day, but there is always in the sky a little blue patch at the service of happiness, which lovers see, even when the rest of creation are under their umbrellas. On the previous day, Jean Valjean had handed to Marius, in the presence of M. Gillenormand, the five hundred and eighty-four thousand francs. As the marriage took place in the ordinary way, the deeds were very simple. Toussaint was henceforth useless to Jean Valjean, so Cosette inherited

her, and promoted her to the rank of lady's-maid. As for Jean Valjean, a nice room was furnished expressly for him at M. Gillenormand's, and Cosette had said to him so irresistibly,—“Father, I implore you,” that she had almost made him promise that he would come and occupy it. A few days before that fixed for the marriage, an accident happened to Jean Valjean ; he slightly injured the thumb of his right hand. It was not serious, and he had not allowed any one to poultice it, or even see it, not even Cosette. Still, it compelled him to wrap up his hand in a bandage and wear his arm in a sling, and this, of course, prevented him from signing anything. M. Gillenormand, as supervising guardian to Cosette, took his place. We will not take the reader either to the mayoralty or to church. Two lovers are not usually followed so far, and we are wont to turn our back on the drama, so soon as it puts a bridegroom's bouquet in its button-hole. We will restrict ourselves to noting an incident which, though unnoticed by the bridal party, marked the drive from the Rue des Filles du Calvaire to St Paul's church.

The Rue Saint Louis was being repaired at the time, and it was blocked from the Rue du Parc Royal, hence it was impossible for the carriage to go direct to St Paul's. As they were obliged to change their course, the most simple plan was to turn into the boulevard. One of the guests drew attention to the fact that, as it was Shrove Tuesday, there would be a block of vehicles. “Why so ?” M. Gillenormand asked. “On account of the masks.” “Famous,” said the grandfather ; “we will go that way. These young people are going to marry and see the serious side of life, and seeing the masquerade will be a slight preparation for it.” They turned into the boulevard : the first contained Cosette and Aunt Gillenormand, M. Gillenormand and Jean Valjean. Marius, still separated from his bride, according to custom, was in the second. The nuptial procession, on turning out of the Rue des Filles du Calvaire, joined the long file of vehicles making an endless chain from the Madeleine to the Bastille, and from the Bastille to the Madeleine. Masks were abundant on the boulevard : and though it rained every now and then, Paillasse, Pantalon, and Gille were obstinate. In the good humour of that winter of 1833 Paris had disguised itself as Venus. We do not see such Shrove Tuesdays now-a-days, for as everything existing is a wide-spread carnival, there is no carnival left. The side-walks were thronged with pedestrians, and the windows with gazers ; and the terraces crowning the peristyles of the thea-

tres were covered with spectators. In addition to the masks, they look at the file, peculiar to Shrove Tuesday as to Longchamp, of vehicles of every description, citadines, carts, curricles, and cabs, marching in order rigorously riveted to each other by police regulations, and, as it were, running on tramways. Any one who happens to be in one of these vehicles is at once spectator and spectacle. Policemen standing by the side of the boulevard kept in place these two interminable files moving in a contrary direction, and watched that nothing should impede the double current of these two streams, one running up, the other down, one towards the Chaussée d'Antin, the other towards the Faubourg St Antoine. The escutcheoned carriages of the Peers of France and Ambassadors held the crown of the causeway, coming and going freely; and certain magnificent and gorgeous processions, notably the Bœuf gras, had the same privilege. In this Parisian gaiety, England clacked his whip, for the post-chaise of Lord Seymour, at which a popular sobriquet was hurled, passed with a great rumour.

In the double file, along which Municipal Guards galloped like watch-dogs, honest family arks, crowded with great-aunts and grandmothers, displayed at windows healthy groups of disguised children, Pierrots of seven, and Pierrettes of six, ravishing little creatures, feeling that they officially formed part of the public merriment, penetrated with the dignity of their Harlequinade, and displaying the gravity of functionaries. From time to time a block occurred somewhere in the procession of vehicles; one or other of the two side files stopped until the knot was untied, and one impeded vehicle stopped the entire line. Then they started again. The wedding carriages were in the file, going toward the Bastille on the right-hand side of the boulevard. Opposite the Rue du Pont-aux-Choux there was a stoppage, and almost at the same moment the file on the other side proceeding toward the Madeleine stopped too. At this point of the procession there was a carriage of masks. These carriages, or, to speak more correctly, these cart-loads of masks, are well known to the Parisians; if they failed on a Shrove Tuesday or at mid-lent, people would say, "*There's something behind it. Probably we are going to have a change of Ministry.*" A heap of Cassanders, Harlequins, and Columbines jolted above the heads of the passers-by—all possible grotesques, from the Turk to the savage. Hercules supporting Marquises, fish-fags who would make Rabelais stop his ears, as well as Mænads who would make Aristophanes look down, tow perukes, pink fleshings, three-cornered hats, pantaloons, spectacles, cries given to the pedestrians, fists

stemmed on hips, bold postures, naked shoulders, masked faces, and unmuzzled immodesty ; a chaos of effronteries driven by a coachman in a head-dress of flowers—such is this institution. Greece felt the want of Thespis' cart, and France needs Vadé's fiacre. All may be parodied, even parody ; and the Saturnalia, that grimace of antique beauty, arrive by swelling and swelling at the Mardi gras : and the Bacchanal, formerly crowned with vine-leaves, inundated by sunshine, and displaying her marble-breasts in a divine semi-nudity, which is now flabby under the drenched rage of the North, has ended by calling herself —.

The tradition of the coaches of masks dates back to the oldest times of the Monarchy : the accounts of Louis XI. allow the Palace steward “twenty sous tournois for three coaches of masquerades.” In our time, these noisy piles of creatures generally ride in some old coucou of which they encumber the roof, or cover with their tumultuous group a landau of which the hood is thrown back. You see them on the seat, on the front stool, on the springs of the hood, and on the pole, and they even straddle across the lamps. They are standing, lying down, or seated, cross-legged, or with pendant legs. The women occupy the knees of the men, and this wild pyramid is seen for a long distance over the heads of the crowd. These vehicles form mountains of merriment in the midst of the mob, and Collé, Panard, and Piron flow from them enriched with slang, and the fish-fag's catechism is expectorated from above upon the people. This fiacre, which has grown enormous through its burden, has an air of conquest ; Brouaha is in front and Tohu-bohu behind. People shout in it, sing in it, yell in it, and writhe with happiness in it ; gaiety roars there, sarcasm flashes, and joviality is displayed like a purple robe ; two screws drag in it farce expanded into an apotheosis, and it is the triumphal car of laughter,—a laughter, though, too cynical to be frank, and in truth this laughter is suspicious. It has a mission, that of proving the carnival to the Parisians. These fish-fag vehicles, in which some strange darkness is perceptible, cause the philosopher to reflect ; there is something of the government in them, and you lay your finger there on a curious affinity between public men and public women. It is certainly a sorry thought, that heaped up turpitutes give a sum-total of gaiety, that a people can be amused by building up ignominy on opprobrium, that spying, acting as a caryatid to prostitution, amuses the mob while affronting it, that the crowd is pleased to see pass on four wheels this monstrous living

pile of beings, spangled rags, one half ordure, one half light, who bark and sing, that they should clap their hands at all this shame, and that no festival is possible for the multitude unless the police promenade in its midst these twenty-headed hydras of joy. Most sad this certainly is, but what is to be done? These tumbrrels of beribboned and flowered filth are insulted and amnestized by the public laughter, and the laughter of all is the accomplice of the universal degradation. Certain unhealthy festivals disintegrate the people and convert them into populace, but a populace, like tyrants, requires buffoons. The king has Roquelaure, and the people has Paillasse. Paris is the great mad city, wherever it is not the great sublime city, and the carnival there is political. Paris, let us confess it, willingly allows infamy to play a farce for its amusement, and only asks of its masters—when it has masters—one thing, ruddle the mud for me. Rome was of the same humour,—she loved Nero, and Nero was a Titanic débardeur.

Accident willed it, as we have just said, that one of the shapeless groups of masked men and women collected in a vast barouche, stopped on the left of the boulevard, while the wedding party stopped on the right. The carriage in which the masks were, noticed opposite to it the carriage in which was the bride.

“Hilloh!” said a mask, “a wedding.”

“A false wedding,” another retorted, “we are the true one.”

And, as they were too far off to address the wedding party, and as they also feared the interference of the police, the two masks looked elsewhere. The whole vehicle-load had plenty of work a moment after, for the mob began hissing it, which is the caress given by the mob to masquerades, and the two masks who had just spoken were obliged to face the crowd with their comrades, and found the projectiles from the arsenal of the Halles scarce sufficient to reply to the enormous barks of the people. A frightful exchange of metaphors took place between the masks and the crowd. In the mean while, two other masks in the same carriage, a Spaniard with an exaggerated nose, an oldish look, and enormous black moustaches, and a thin and very youthful fish-girl, wearing a half mask, had noticed the wedding also, and while their companions and the spectators were insulting each other, held a conversation in a low voice. Their aside was covered by the tumult and was lost in it. The showers had drenched the open carriage, the February wind is not warm, and so the fish-girl while answering the Spaniard

shivered, laughed, and coughed. This was the dialogue, which we translate from the original slang.

“Look here.”

“What is it, pa ?”

“Do you see that old man ?”

“What old man ?”

“There, in the wedding coach, with his arm in a sling.”

“Yes.”

“Well ?”

“I feel sure that I know him.”

“Ah !”

“May my neck be cut, and I never said you, thou, or I, in my life, if I do not know that Parisian.”*

“To-day Paris is Pantin.”

“Can you see the bride by stooping ?”

“No.”

“And the bridegroom ?”

“There is no bridegroom in that coach.”

“Nonsense.”

“Unless it be the other old man.”

“Come, try and get a look at the bride by stooping.”

“I can’t.”

“No matter, that old fellow who has something the matter with his paw, I feel certain I know him.”

“And what good will it do you, your knowing him ?”

“I don’t know. Sometimes !”

“I don’t care a curse for old fellows.”

“I know him.”

“Know him as much as you like.”

“How the deuce is he at the wedding ?”

“Why, we are there too.”

“Where does the wedding come from ?”

“How do I know ?”

“Listen.”

“Well, what is it ?”

“You must do something.”

“What is it ?”

“Get out of our trap and follow that wedding.”

“What to do ?”

“To know where it goes and what it is. Make haste and get down ; run, my daughter, for you are young.”

“I can’t leave the carriage.”

“Why not ?”

* Je veux qu'on me fauche le colabre et n'avoir de ma vioc dit vousaille, tonorgue, ni mézig, si je ne colombe pas ce pantinois-là.

"I am hired."

"Oh, the devil!"

"I owe the Prefecture my day's work."

"That's true."

"If I leave the carriage, the first inspector who sees me will arrest me. You know that."

"Yes, I know it."

"To-day I am bought by Pharos" (the government).

"No matter, that old fellow bothers me."

"All old men bother you, and yet you ain't a chicken yourself."

"He is in the first carriage."

"Well, what then?"

"In the bride's carriage."

"What next?"

"So he is the father."

"How does that concern me?"

"I tell you he is the father."

"You do nothing but talk about that father."

"Listen."

"Well, what?"

"I can only go away masked, for I am hidden here, and no one knows I am here. But to-morrow there will be no masks, for it is Ash Wednesday, and I run a risk of being nailed. I shall be obliged to go back to my hole, but you are free."

"Not quite."

"Well, more so than I am."

"Well, what then?"

"You must try and find out where that wedding party is going to."

"Going to?"

"Yes."

"Oh, I know."

"Where to, then?"

"To the Cadran Bleu."

"But that is not the direction."

"Well then! to La Rapée."

"Or elsewhere."

"They can do as they like, for weddings are free."

"That is not the thing. I tell you that you must try and find out for me what that wedding is, and where it comes from."

"Of course! that would be funny. It's so jolly easy to find out a week after where a wedding party has gone to that passed on Shrove Tuesday. A pin in a bundle of hay. Is it possible?"

"No matter, you must try. Do you hear, Azelma?"

The two files recommenced their opposite movement on the boulevard, and the carriage of masks lost out of sight that which contained the bride.

CHAPTER LXVII.

JEAN VALJEAN STILL HAS HIS ARM IN A SLING.

To realize one's dream—to whom is this granted? There must be elections for this in heaven; we are the unconscious candidates and the angels vote. Cosette and Marius had been elected. Cosette, both at the mayoralty and at church, was brilliant and touching. Toussaint, helped by Nicolette, had dressed her. Cosette wore over a skirt of white taffetas her dress of Binche lace, a veil of English point, a necklace of fine pearls, and a crown of orange flowers; all this was white, and in this whiteness she was radiant. It was an exquisite candour expanding and becoming transfigured in light; she looked like a virgin on the point of becoming a Deess. Marius' fine hair was shining and perfumed, and here and there a glimpse could be caught under the thick curls, of pale lines, which were the scars of the barricade. The grandfather, superb, with head erect, amalgamating in his toilet and manners all the elegances of the time of Barras, gave his arm to Cosette. He took the place of Jean Valjean, who, owing to his wound, could not give his hand to the bride. Jean Valjean, dressed all in black, followed and smiled.

"Monsieur Fauchelevent," the grandfather said to him, "this is a glorious day, and I vote the end of afflictions and cares. Henceforth there must be no sorrow anywhere. By Heaven! I decree joy! misfortune has no right to exist, and it is a disgrace for the azure of heaven that there are unfortunate men. Evil does not come from man, who, at the bottom, is good; but all human miseries have their capital and central government in hell, otherwise called the Tuileries of the devil. There, I am making demagogic remarks at present! For my part I have no political opinions left; and all I stick to is that men should be rich, that is to say, joyous."

When, at the end of all the ceremonies,—after pronouncing before the mayor and before the priest all the yeses possible, after signing the register at the municipality and in the sacristy, after exchanging rings, after kneeling side by side under the

canopy of white moire in the smoke of the censer,—they arrived holding each other by the hand, admired and envied by all. Marius in black, she in white, preceded by the beadle in the colonel's epaulettes, striking the flag-stones with his halberd, between two rows of dazzled spectators, at the church doors which were thrown wide open, ready to get into their carriage,—and then all was over. Cosette could not yet believe it. She looked at Marius, she looked at the crowd, she looked at heaven ; it seemed as if she were afraid of awaking. Her astonished and anxious air imparted something strangely enchanting to her. In returning they both rode in the same carriage, Marius seated by Cosette's side, and M. Gillenormand and Jean Valjean forming their vis-à-vis. Aunt Gillenormand had fallen back a step and was in the second carriage. "My children," the grandfather said, "you are now M. le Baron and Madame la Baronne, with thirty thousand francs a-year." And Cosette, nuzzling against Marius, caressed his ear with the angelic whisper, "It is true, then, my name is Marius and I am Madame Thou." These two beings were resplendent, they had reached the irrevocable and irrecoverable moment, the dazzling point of intersection of all youth and all joy. They realized Jean Prouvaire's views ; together they did not count forty years. It was marriage sublimated ; and these two children were two lilies. They did not see each other, but contemplated each other. Cosette perceived Marius in a glory, and Marius perceived Cosette upon an altar. And upon this altar, and in this glory, the two apotheoses blending behind a cloud for Cosette, and a flashing for Marius, there was the ideal thing, the real thing, the meeting-place of kisses and of sleep, the nuptial pillow.

All the torments they had gone through returned to them in intoxication ; it appeared to them as if the griefs, the sleeplessness, the tears, the anguish, the terrors, and the despair, by being converted into caresses and sunbeams, rendered more charming still the charming hour which was approaching ; and that their sorrows were so many handmaidens who performed the toilette of joy. How good it is to have suffered ! their misfortunes made a halo for their happiness, and the long agony of their love ended in an ascension. There was in these two souls the same enchantment, tinged with voluptuousness in Marius, and with modesty in Cosette. They said to each other in a whisper, "We will go and see again our little garden in the Rue Plumet." The folds of Cosette's dress were upon Marius. Such a day is an ineffable blending of dream and certainty : you possess and you suppose, and you still have time

before you to divine. It is an indescribable emotion on that day to be at midday and think of midnight. The delight of these two hearts overflowed upon the crowd, and imparted merriment to the passers-by. People stopped in the Rue St Antoine, in front of St Paul's, to look through the carriage-window—the orange flowers trembling on Cosette's head. Then they returned to the Rue des Filles du Calvaire—home. Marius, side by side with Cosette, ascended, triumphantly and radiantly, that staircase up which he had been dragged in a dying state. The beggars, collected before the gate and dividing the contents of their purses, blessed them. There were flowers everywhere, and the house was no less fragrant than the church: after the incense the rose. They fancied they could hear voices singing in infinitude; they had God in their hearts; destiny appeared to them like a ceiling of stars; they saw above their heads the flashing of the rising sun. Marius gazed at Cosette's charming bare arm and the pink things which could be vaguely seen through the lace of the stomacher, and Cosette, catching Marius' glance, blushed to the white of her eyes. A good many old friends of the Gillenormand family had been invited, and they thronged round Cosette, outvying each other in calling her Madame la Baronne. The officer, Theodule Gillenormand, now captain, had come from Chartres, where he was stationed, to be present at his cousin's marriage: Cosette did not recognize him. He, on his side, accustomed to be thought a pretty fellow by the women, remembered Cosette no more than any other.

"How right I was in not believing that story of the lancer's!" Father Gillenormand said to himself aside.

Cosette had never been more affectionate to Jean Valjean, and she was in unison with Father Gillenormand; while he built up joy in aphorisms and maxims, she exhaled love and beauty like a perfume. Happiness wishes everybody to be happy. In talking to Jean Valjean she formed inflections of her voice from the time when she was a little girl, and caressed him with a smile. A banquet had been prepared in the dining-room; an illumination *à giorno* is the necessary seasoning of a great joy, and mist and darkness are not accepted by the happy. They do not consent to be black; night, yes; darkness, no; and if there be no sun, one must be made. The dining-room was a furnace of gay things; in the centre, above the white glistening tables, hung a Venetian chandelier, with all sorts of coloured birds, blue, violet, red, and green, perched among the candles; round the chandelier were girandoles, and on the walls were mirrors with three and four branches; glasses, crystal, plate,

china, crockery, gold, and silver, all flashed and rejoiced. The spaces between the candelabra were filled up with bouquets, so that where there was not a light there was a flower. In the anteroom three violins and a flute played some of Haydn's quartettes. Jean Valjean had seated himself on a chair in the drawing-room, behind the door, which, being thrown back, almost concealed him. A few minutes before they sat down to table Cosette gave him a deep courtesy, while spreading out her wedding-dress with both hands, and with a tenderly mocking look, asked him,—

“Father, are you satisfied?”

“Yes,” said Jean Valjean, “I am satisfied.”

“Well, then, laugh.”

Jean Valjean began laughing. A few minutes later Basque came in to announce that dinner was on the table. The guests, preceded by M. Gillenormand, who gave his arm to Cosette, entered the dining-room, and collected round the table in the prescribed order. There was a large easy chair on either side of the bride, one for M. Gillenormand, the other for Jean Valjean. M. Gillenormand seated himself, but the other chair remained empty. All looked round for Monsieur Fauchelevent, but he was no longer there, and M. Gillenormand hailed Basque.

“Do you know where M. Fauchelevent is?”

“Yes, sir, I do,” Basque replied. “Monsieur Fauchelevent requested me to tell you, sir, that his hand pained him, and that he could not dine with M. le Baron and Madame la Baronne. He therefore begged to be excused, but would call to-morrow. He has just left.”

This empty chair momentarily chilled the effusion of the wedding feast; but though M. Fauchelevent was absent M. Gillenormand was there, and the grandfather shone for two. He declared that M. Fauchelevent acted rightly in going to bed early if he were in pain, but that it was only a small hurt. This declaration was sufficient; besides, what is a dark corner in such a submersion of joy? Cosette and Marius were in one of those egotistic and blessed moments when people possess no other faculty than that of perceiving joy; and then M. Gillenormand had an idea, “By Jupiter, this chair is empty; come hither, Marius; your aunt, though she has a right to it will permit you; this chair is for you; it is legal, and it is pretty—Fortunatus by the side of Fortunata.” The whole of the guests applauded. Marius took Jean Valjean’s place by Cosette’s side, and things were so arranged that Cosette, who had at first been saddened by the absence of Jean Valjean, ended by being pleased

at it. From the moment when Marius was the substitute Cosette would not have regretted God. She placed her little white satin-slipped foot upon Marius' foot. When the easy chair was occupied M. Fauchelevent was effaced, and nothing was wanting. And five minutes later all the guests were laughing from one end of the table to the other, with all the forgetfulness of humour. At dessert M. Gillenormand rose, with a glass of champagne in his hand, only half full, so that the trembling of ninety-two years might not upset it, and proposed the health of the new-married couple.

"You will not escape from two sermons," he exclaimed, "this morning you had the curé's, and this evening you will have grandpapa's; listen to me, for I am going to give you some advice: Adore each other. I do not beat round the bush, but go straight to the point; be happy. There are no other sages in creation but the turtle-doves. Philosophers say, Moderate your joys; but I say, Throw the bridle on the neck of your joys. Love like fiends, be furious. The philosophers babble, and I should like to thrust their philosophy down their throats for them. Can we have too many perfumes, too many open rose-buds, too many singing nightingales, too many green leaves, and too much dawn in life? can we love too much? can we please one another too much? Take care, Estella, you are too pretty! take care, Nemorin, you are too handsome! What jolly nonsense! can people enchant each other, tease each other, and charm each other too much? can they be too loving? can they be too happy? Moderate your joys,—oh stuff! down with the philosophers, for wisdom is jubilation. Do you jubilate? let us jubilate; are we happy because we are good, or are we good because we are happy? Is the Sancy diamond called the Sancy because it belonged to Harlay de Sancy, or because it weighs one hundred and six carats? I do not know; and life is full of such problems: the important thing is to have the Sancy and happiness. Be happy without bargaining, and let us blindly obey the sun. What is the sun? it is love; and when I say love, I mean woman. Ah, ah! woman is an omnipotence. Ask that demagogue, Marius, if he is not the slave of that little she-tyrant, Cosette? and willingly so, the coward. Woman! there is not a Robespierre who can stand, but woman reigns. I am now only a royalist of that royalty. What is Adam? the royalty of Eve. There is no '89 for Eve. There was the royal sceptre surmounted by the fleur-de-lys, there was the imperial sceptre surmounted by a globe, there was Charlemagne's sceptre of iron, and the sceptre of Louis the Great, which was of gold. The Revolution twisted them between its

thumb and fore-finger like straws. It is finished, it is broken, it lies on the ground,—there is no sceptre left. But just make a revolution against that little embroidered handkerchief which smells of patchouli! I should like to see you at it. Try it. Why is it solid? because it is a rag. Ah! you are the nineteenth century. Well, what then? We were the eighteenth, and were as foolish as you. Do not suppose that you have made any tremendous change in the world because your stoop-gallant is called cholera, and your bourrée the cachucha. After all, woman must always be loved, and I defy you to get out of that. These she-devils are our angels. Yes, love, woman and a kiss, form a circle from which I defy you to issue, and for my own part I should be very glad to enter it again. Who among you has seen the star, Venus, the great coquette of the abyss, the Celimène of ocean rise in infinite space, appeasing everything below her, and looking at the waves like a woman? The ocean is a rude Alcestes, and yet, however much he may growl, when Venus appears he is forced to smile. That brute-beast submits, and we are all so. Anger, tempest, thunder-bolts, foam up to the ceiling. A woman comes upon the stage, a star rises, and you crawl in the dust. Marius was fighting six months ago, and is marrying to-day, and that is well done. Yes, Marius, yes, Cosette, you are right. Exist bravely one for the other, make us burst with rage because we cannot do the same, and idolize each other. Take in both your beaks the little straws of felicity which lie on the ground, and make of them a nest for life. By Jove! to love, to be loved, what a great miracle when a man is young! Do not suppose that you invented it. I too have dreamed, and thought, and sighed. I too have had a moon-lit soul. Love is a child six thousand years of age, and has a right to a long white beard. Methuselah is a baby by the side of Cupid. Sixty centuries back man and woman got out of the scrape by loving. The devil, who is cunning, took to hating man; but man, who is more cunning still, took to loving woman. In this way he did himself more good than the devil did him harm. That trick was discovered simultaneously with the terrestrial paradise. My friends, the invention is old, but it is bran new. Take advantage of it; be Daphnis and Chloe, while waiting till you are Baucis and Philemon. Manage so that, when you are together, you may want for nothing, and that Cosette may be the sun for Marius, and Marius the universe for Cosette. Cosette, let your fine weather be your husband's smiles. Marius, let your wife's tears be the rain, and mind that it never does rain in your household. You have drawn the good num-

ber in the lottery, love in the sacrament. You have the prize number, so keep it carefully under lock and key. Do not squander it. Adore each other, and a fig for the rest. Believe what I tell you, then, for it is good sense, and good sense cannot deceive. Be to one another a religion, for each man has his own way of adoring GOD. Saperlotte ! the best way of adoring GOD is to love one's wife. I love you ! that is my catechism ; and whoever loves is orthodox. The oath of Henri IV. places sanctity between guttling and intoxication. *Ventre Saint Gris !* I do not belong to the religion of that oath, for woman is forgotten in it, and that surprises me on the part of Henri IV.'s oath. My friends, long live woman ! I am old, so people say ; but it is amazing how disposed I feel to be young. I should like to go and listen to the bagpipes in the woods. These children, who succeed in being beautiful and satisfied, intoxicate me. I am quite willing to marry if any body will have me. It is impossible to imagine that GOD has made us for anything else than this, to idolize, to purr, to adonize, to be a pigeon, to be a cock, to caress our lovers from morning till night, to admire ourselves in our little wife, to be proud, to be triumphant, and to swell. Such is the object of life. That, without offence, is what we thought in our time, when we were young men. Ah ! vertubamboché, what charming women there were in those days, what ducks ! I carried out my ravages among them. So love each other. If men and women did not love, I really do not see what use there would be in having a spring. And, for my part, I would pray to le bon Dieu to lock up all the fine things he shows us and take them back from us, and to return to his box the flowers, the birds, and the pretty girls. My children, receive the blessing of an old man."

The evening was lively, gay, and pleasant ; the sovereign good humour of the grandfather gave the tone to the whole festivity, and each was regulated by this almost centenerical cordiality. There was a little dancing, and a good deal of laughter ; it was a merry wedding, to which that worthy old fellow "Once on a time" might have been invited ; however, he was present in the person of Father Gillenormand. There was a tumult, and then a silence ; the married couple disappeared. A little after midnight the Gillenormand mansion became a temple. Here we stop, for an angel stands on the threshold of wedding-nights, smiling, and with finger on lip ; the mind becomes contemplative before this sanctuary in which the celebration of love is held. There must be rays of light above such houses, and the joy which they contain must pass

through the walls in brilliancy, and vaguely irradiate the darkness. It is impossible for this sacred and fatal festival not to send a celestial radiance to infinitude. Love is the sublime crucible in which the fusion of man and woman takes place ; the one being, the triple being, the final being, the human trinity issue from it. This birth of two souls in one must have emotion for the shadows. The lover is the priest, and the transported virgin feels an awe. A portion of this joy ascends to God. When there is really marriage, that is to say, when there is love, the ideal is mingled with it, and a nuptial couch forms in the darkness a corner of the dawn. If it was given to the mental eye to perceive the formidable and charming visions of higher life, it is probable that it would see the forms of night, the unknown winged beings, the blue wayfarers of the invisible, bending down round the luminous house, satisfied and blessing, pointing out to each other the virgin bride, who is gently startled, and having the reflection of human felicity on their divine countenances. If, at this supreme hour, the pair, dazzled with pleasure, and who believe themselves alone, were to listen, they would hear in their chamber a confused rustling of wings, for perfect happiness implies the guarantee of angels. This little obscure alcove has an entire heaven for its ceiling. When two mouths, which have become sacred by love, approach each other in order to create, it is impossible but that there is a tremour in the immense mystery of the stars above this ineffable kiss. These felicities are the real ones, there is no joy beyond their joys, love is the sole ecstasy, and all the rest weeps. To love or to have loved is sufficient ; ask nothing more after that. There is no other pearl to be found in the dark folds of life, for love is a consummation.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

IMMORTALE JECUR.

WHAT had become of Jean Valjean ? Directly after he had laughed, in accordance with Cosette's request, as no one was paying any attention to him, Jean Valjean rose, and, unnoticed, reached the anteroom. It was the same room which he had entered eight months previously, black with mud and blood and gunpowder, bringing back the grandson to the grandfather.

The old panelling was garlanded with flowers and leaves, the musicians were seated on the sofa upon which Marius had been deposited. Basque, in black coat, knee-breeches, white cravat, and white gloves, was placing wreaths of roses round each of the dishes which was going to be served up. Jean Valjean showed him his arm in the sling, requested him to explain his absence, and quitted the house. The windows of the dining-room looked out on the street, and Valjean stood for some minutes motionless in the obscurity of those radiant windows. He listened, and the confused sound of the banquet reached his ears; he heard the grandfather's loud and dictatorial voice, the violins, the rattling of plates and glasses, the bursts of laughter, and in all this gay rumour he distinguished Cosette's soft, happy voice. He left the Rue des Filles du Calvaire and returned to the Rue de l'Homme Armé. In going home he went along the Rue Saint Louis, the Rue Culture-Saint-Catherine, and the Blancs Manteaux; it was a little longer, but it was the road by which he had been accustomed to come with Cosette during the last three months, in order to avoid the crowd and mud of the Rue Vieille du Temple. This road, which Cosette had passed along, excluded the idea of any other itinerary for him. Jean Valjean returned home, lit his candle, and went up-stairs. The apartments were empty, and not even Toussaint was in there now. Jean Valjean's footsteps made more noise in the rooms than usual. All the wardrobes were open; he entered Cosette's room, and there were no sheets on the bed. The pillow, without a case or lace, was laid on the blankets folded at the foot of the bed, in which no one was going to sleep again. All the small feminine articles to which Cosette clung had been removed; only the heavy furniture and the four walls remained. Toussaint's bed was also un-made, and the only one made which seemed to be expecting somebody was Jean Valjean's. Jean Valjean looked at the walls, closed some of the wardrobe drawers, and walked in and out of the rooms. Then he returned to his own room and placed his candle on the table; he had taken his arm out of the sling and used it as if he were suffering no pain in it. He went up to his bed and his eyes fell—was it by accident or was it purposely?—on the *inseparable* of which Cosette had been jealous, the little valise which never left him. On June 4th, when he arrived at the Rue d l'Homme Armé, he laid it on a table; he now walked up to this table with some eagerness, took the key out of his pocket, and opened the portmanteau. He slowly drew out the clothes in which, ten years previously, Cosette had left Montfermeil; first the little black dress, then the black

handkerchief, then the stout shoes, which Cosette could almost have worn still, so small was her foot ; next the petticoat, then the apron, and, lastly, the woollen stockings. These stockings, in which the shape of a little leg was gracefully marked, were no longer than Jean Valjean's hand. All these articles were black, and it was he who took them for her to Montfermeil. He laid each article on the bed as he took it out, and he thought and remembered. It was in winter, a very cold December, she was shivering under her rags, and her poor feet were quite red in her wooden shoes. He, Jean Valjean, had made her take off these rags, and put on this mourning garb ; the mother must have been pleased in her tomb to see her daughter wearing mourning for her, and above all to see that she was well clothed and was warm. He thought of that forest of Montfermeil, he thought of the weather it was, of the trees without leaves, of the wood without birds, and the sky without sun ; but no matter, it was charming. He arranged the little clothes on the bed, the handkerchief near the petticoat, the stockings along with the shoes, the apron by the side of the dress, and he looked at them one after the other. She was not much taller than that, she had her large doll in her arms, she had put her louis d'or in the pocket of this apron, she laughed, they walked along holding each other's hand, and she had no one but him in the world.

Then his venerable white head fell on the bed, his old stoical heart broke, his face was buried in Cosette's clothes, and had any one passed up-stairs at that moment he would have heard frightful sobs. The old formidable struggle, of which we have already seen several phases, began again. Jacob only wrestled with the angel for one night. Alas ! how many times have we seen Jean Valjean caught round the waist in the darkness by his conscience, and struggling frantically against it. An extraordinary struggle ! at certain moments the foot slips, at others, the ground gives way. How many times had that conscience, clinging to the right, strangled and crushed him ! how many times had inexorable truth set its foot on his chest ! how many times had he, felled by the light, cried for mercy ! how many times had that implacable light, illumined within and over him by the Bishop, dazzled him when he wished to be blinded ! how many times had he risen again in the contest, clung to the rock, supported himself by sophistry, and been dragged through the dust, at one moment throwing his conscience under him, at another thrown by it ! how many times, after an equivoque, after the treacherous and specious reasoning of egotism, had he heard his irritated conscience cry in his ears, Tripper ! scoundrel ! how many times had his refractory thoughts groaned convuls-

ively under the evidence of duty ! what secret wounds he had, which he alone felt bleeding ! what excoriations there were in his lamentable existence ! how many times had he risen, bleeding, mutilated, crushed, enlightened, with despair in his heart and serenity in his soul ! and though vanquished, he felt himself the victor, and after having dislocated, tortured, and broken him, his conscience, erect before him, luminous and tranquil, would say to him,—“Now go in peace !” What a mournful peace, alas ! after issuing from such a contest.

This night, however, Jean Valjean felt that he was fighting his last battle. A crushing question presented itself ; pre-destinations are not all straight ; they do not develope themselves in a rectilinear avenue before the predestined man ; they have blind alleys, zigzags, awkward corners, and perplexing cross-roads. Jean Valjean was halting at this moment at the most dangerous of these cross-roads. He had reached the supreme crossing of good and evil, and had that gloomy intersection before his eyes. This time again, as had already happened in other painful interludes, two roads presented themselves before him, one tempting, the other terrifying ; which should he take ? The one which frightened him was counselled by the mysterious pointing hand, which we all perceive every time that we fix our eyes upon the darkness. Jean Valjean had once again a choice between the terrible haven and the smiling snare. Is it true, then ? the soul may be cured, but not destiny. What a frightful thing ! an incurable destiny ! The question which presented itself was this,—In what way was Jean Valjean going to behave to the happiness of Cosette and Marius ? That happiness he had willed, he had made ; and at this hour, in gazing upon it, he could have the species of satisfaction which a cutler would have who recognized his trade-mark upon a knife, when he drew it all smoking from his chest. Cosette had Marius, Marius possessed Cosette ; they possessed everything, even wealth, and it was his doing. But, now that this happiness existed and was there, how was he, Jean Valjean, to treat it ? should he force himself upon it and treat it as if belonging to himself ? Doubtless, Cosette was another man’s ; but should he, Jean Valjean, retain of Cosette all that he could retain ? Should he remain the sort of father, scarce seen but respected, which he had hitherto been ? should he introduce himself quietly into Cosette’s house ? should he carry his past to this future without saying a word ? should he present himself there as one having a right, and should he sit down, veiled, at this luminous hearth ? Should he smilingly take the hands

of these two innocent creatures in his tragic hands ? should he place on the andirons of the Gillenormand drawing-room his feet which dragged after them the degrading shadow of the law ? Should he render the obscurity on his brow and the cloud on theirs denser ? should he join his catastrophe to their two felicities ? should he continue to be silent ? in a word, should he be the sinister dumb man of destiny by the side of these two happy beings ? We must be accustomed to fatality and to meeting it, to raise our eyes when certain questions appear to us in their terrible nudity. Good and evil are behind this stern note of interrogation. What are you going to do ? the sphynx asks. This habit of trial Jean Valjean had, and he looked at the sphynx fixedly, and examined the pitiless problem from all sides. Cosette, that charming existence, was the raft of this shipwrecked man ; what should he do, cling to it, or let it go ? If he clung to it, he issued from disaster, he remounted to the sunshine, he let the bitter water drip off his clothes and hair, he was saved and lived. Suppose he let it go ? then there was an abyss. He thus dolorously held counsel with his thoughts, or, to speak more correctly, he combated ; he rushed furiously within himself, at one moment against his will, at another against his convictions. It was fortunate for Jean Valjean that he had been able to weep, for that enlightened him, perhaps. Still, the beginning was stern ; a tempest, more furious than that which had formerly forced him to Arras, was let loose within him. The past returned to him in the face of the present ; he compared and sobbed. Once the sluice of tears was opened, the despairing man writhed. He felt himself arrested, alas ! in the deadly fight between one egotism and one duty. When we thus recoil inch by inch before our ideal, wildly, obstinately, exasperated at yielding, disputing the ground, hoping for a possible flight, and seeking an issue, what a sudden and sinister resistance is the foot of a wall behind us ! to feel the sacred shadow forming an obstacle !

Hence we have never finished with our conscience. Make up your mind, Brutus, make up your mind, Cato. It is bottomless, for it is GOD. You cast into this pit the labour of your whole life,—your fortune, your wealth, your success, your liberty, or your country, your comfort, your repose, your joy. More, more, more ! empty the vase, tread over the urn, you must end by throwing in your heart. There is a barrel like this somewhere in the Hades of old. Is it not pardonable to refuse at last ? can that which is inexhaustible have any claim ? are not endless chains beyond human strength ? who then would blame Sisyphus and Jean Valjean for saying, It is enough ! The

obedience of matter is limited by friction: is there not a limit to the obedience of the soul? If perpetual motion be impossible, why is perpetual devotion demanded? The first step is nothing, it is the last that is difficult. What was the Champmathieu affair by the side of Cosette's marriage? what did it bring with it? what is returning to the hulks by the side of entering nothingness? Oh, first step to descend, how gloomy thou art! oh, second step, how black thou art! How could he help turning his head away this time? Martyrdom is a sublimation, a corrosive sublimation, it is a torture which consecrates. A man may consent to it for the first hour; he sits on the throne of red-hot iron, the crown of red-hot iron is placed on his head, he accepts the red-hot globe, he takes the red-hot sceptre, but he still has to don the mantle of flame, and is there not a moment when the miserable flesh revolts and the punishment is fled from? At length Jean Valjean entered the calmness of prostration, he wished, thought over, and considered the alternations, the mysterious balance of light and shadow. Should he force his galleys on these two dazzling children, or consummate his own irremediable destruction? On one side was the sacrifice of Cosette, on the other his own.

On which solution did he decide? what determination did he form? what his mental definitive reply to the incorruptible interrogatory of fatality? what door did he resolve on opening? which side of his life did he make up his mind to close and condemn? amid all those unfathomable precipices that surrounded him, which was his choice? what extremity did he accept? to which of these gulfs did he nod his head? His confusing reverie lasted all night; he remained till day-break in the same position, leaning over the bed, prostrate beneath the enormity of fate, crushed perhaps, alas! with clenched fists, and arms extended at a right angle like an unnailed crucified man thrown with his face on the ground. He remained thus for twelve hours, the twelve hours of a long winter's night, frozen, without raising his head or uttering a syllable. He was motionless as a corpse, while his thoughts rolled on the ground or fled away. Sometimes like a hydra, sometimes like the eagle. To see him thus you would have thought him a dead man; but all at once he started convulsively, and his mouth pressed to Cosette's clothes, kissed them; then you could see that he was alive.

CHAPTER LXIX.

THE SEVENTH CIRCLE AND THE EIGHTH HEAVEN.

THE day after a wedding is solitary, for people respect the retirement of the happy, and to some extent their lengthened slumbers. The confusion of visits and congratulations does not begin again till a later date. On the morning of Feb. 17 it was a little past midday when Basque, with napkin and feather-brush under his arm, was dusting the anteroom, when he heard a low tap at the door. There had not been a ring, which is discreet on such a day. Basque opened and saw M. Fauchelevent; he conducted him to the drawing-room, which was still in great confusion, and looked like the battle-field of the previous day's joys.

"Really, sir," observed Basque, "we woke late."

"Is your master up?" Jean Valjean asked.

"How is your hand, sir?" Basque replied.

"Better. Is your master up?"

"Which one? the old or the new?"

"Monsieur Pontmercy."

"Monsieur le Baron!" said Basque, drawing himself up.

A baron is before all a baron to his servants; a portion of it comes to them, and they have what a philosopher would call the splashing of the title, and that flatters them. Marius, we may mention in passing, a militant republican as he had proved, was now a baron, in spite of himself. A little revolution had taken place in the family with reference to this title, it was M. Gille-normaud who was attached to it, and Marius who threw it off. But Colonel Pontmercy had written, "*My son will bear my title,*" and Marius obeyed. And then Cosette, in whom the woman was beginning to germinate, was delighted at being a baroness.

"Monsieur le Baron?" repeated Basque, "I will go and see. I will tell him that Monsieur Fauchelevent is here."

"No, do not tell him it is I. Tell him that some one wishes to speak to him privately, and do not mention my name."

"Ah!" said Basque.

"I wish to surprise him."

"Ah!" Basque repeated, giving himself his second 'Ah!' as an explanation of the first.

And he left the room, and Jean Valjean remained alone. The drawing-room, as we said, was all in disorder, and it seemed as if you could still hear the vague rumour of the wedding. On the floor were all sorts of flowers, which had fallen from garlands and head-dresses, and the candles burned down to the socket added wax stalactites to the crystal of the lustres. Not an article of furniture was in its place ; in the corner three or four easy chairs, drawn close together, and forming a circle, looked as if they were continuing a conversation. The *ensemble* was laughing, for there is a certain grace left in a dead festival, for it has been happy. Upon those disarranged chairs, amid those fading flowers and under those extinguished lamps, persons have thought of joy. The sun succeeded the chandelier, and gaily entered the drawing-room. A few moments passed, during which Jean Valjean remained motionless at the spot where Basque left him. His eyes were hollow, and so sunk in their sockets by sleeplessness that they almost disappeared. His black coat displayed the fatigued creases of a coat which has been up all night, and the elbows were white with that down which friction with linen leaves on cloth. Jean Valjean looked at the window designed on the floor at his feet by the sun. There was a noise at the door, and he raised his eyes. Marius came in with head erect, laughing mouth, a peculiar light over his face, a smooth forehead, and a flashing eye. He, too, had not slept either.

"It is you, father!" he exclaimed, on perceiving Jean Valjean ; "why, that ass Basque affected the mysterious. But you have come too early, it is only half-past twelve, and Cosette is asleep."

That word, father, addressed to M. Fauchelevent by Marius, signified supreme felicity. There had always been, as we know, an escarpment, a coldness, and constraint between them ; ice to melt or break. Marius was so intoxicated that the escarpment sank, the ice dissolved, and M. Fauchelevent was for him, as for Cosette, a father. He continued, the words overflowed with him, which is peculiar to these divine paroxysms of joy,—

"How delighted I am to see you! if you only knew how we missed you yesterday! Good day, father; how is your hand? better, is it not?"

And, satisfied with the favourable answer which he gave himself, he went on,—

"We both spoke about you, for Cosette loves you so dearly. You will not forget that you have a room here, for we will not hear a word about the Rue de l'Homme Armé. I do not know

how you were able to live in that street, which is sick, and mean, and poor, which has a barrier at one end, where you feel cold, and which no one can enter! You will come and install yourself here, and from to-day, or else you will have to settle with Cosette. She intends to lead us both by the nose, I warn you. You have seen your room, it is close to ours, and looks out on the gardens : we have had the lock mended, the bed is made, it is all ready, and you have only to move in. Cosette has placed close to your bed a large old easy chair of Utrecht velvet, to which she said, ‘ Hold out your arms to him ! ’ Every spring a nightingale comes to the clump of acacias which faces your windows, and you will have it in two months. You will have its nest on your left and ours on your right ; at night it will sing, and by day Cosette will talk. Your room faces due south ; Cosette will arrange your books in it, the Travels of Captain Cook, and the other, Vancouver’s Travels, and all your matters. There is, I believe, a valise to which you are attached, and I have arranged a corner of honour for it. You have won my grandfather, for you suit him : we will live together. Do you know whist ? you will overwhelm my grandfather if you are acquainted with whist. You will take Cosette for a walk on the day when I go to the Courts ; you will give her your arm, as you used to do, you remember, formerly at the Luxembourg. We are absolutely determined to be very happy, and you will share in our happiness, do you hear, papa ? By the by, you will breakfast with us this morning ? ”

“ I have one thing to remark to you, sir,” said Jean Valjean ; “ I am an ex-convict.”

The limit of the perceptible acute sounds may be as well exceeded for the mind as for the ear. These words, “ *I am an ex-convict*,” coming from M. Fauchelevent’s mouth and entering Marius’ ear went beyond possibility. Marius did not hear : it seemed to him as if something had been just said to him, but he knew not what. He stood with gaping mouth. Jean Valjean unfastened the black handkerchief that supported his right arm, undid the linen rolled round his hand, bared his thumb, and showed it to Marius.

“ I have nothing the matter with my hand,” he said.

Marius looked at the thumb.

“ There was never anything the matter with it,” Jean Valjean added.

There was, in fact, no sign of a wound. Jean Valjean continued,—

“ It was proper that I should be absent from your marriage, and I was so as far as I could. I feigned this wound in

order not to commit a forgery, and render the marriage-deeds null and void."

Marius stammered,—

"What does this mean?"

"It means," Jean Valjean replied, "that I have been to the galleys."

"You are driving me mad," said the horrified Marius.

"Monsieur Pontmercy," said Jean Valjean, "I was nineteen years at the galleys for robbery. Then I was sentenced to them for life, for robbery and a second offence. At the present moment I am an escaped convict."

Although Marius recoiled before the reality, refused the facts, and resisted the evidence, he was obliged to yield to it. He was beginning to understand, and as always happens in such a case, he understood too much. He had the shudder of a hideous internal flash: and an idea that made him shudder crossed his mind. He foresaw a frightful destiny for himself in the future.

"Say all, say all," he exclaimed, "you are Cosette's father!"

And he fell back two steps, with a movement of indescribable horror. Jean Valjean threw up his head with such a majestic attitude that he seemed to rise to the ceiling.

"It is necessary that you should believe me here, sir, although the oath of men like us is not taken in a court of justice—"

Here there was a silence, and then, with a sort of sovereign and sepulchral authority, he added, speaking slowly and laying a stress on the syllables,—

"You will believe me. I, Cosette's father! Before Heaven, no, Monsieur le Baron Pontmercy. I am a peasant of Faverolles, and earned my livelihood by pruning trees. My name is not Fauchelevent, but Jean Valjean. I am nothing to Cosette, so reassure yourself."

Marius stammered,—

"Who proves it to me?"

"I do, since I say it."

Marius looked at this man: he was mournful and calm and no falsehood could issue from such calmness. What is frozen is sincere, and the truth could be felt in this coldness of the tomb.

"I do believe you," said Marius.

Jean Valjean bowed his head, as if to note the fact, and continued,—

"What am I to Cosette? a passer-by. Ten years ago I

did not know that she existed. I love her, it is true, for men love a child which they have seen little when old themselves ; when a man is old he feels like a grandfather to all little children. You can, I suppose, imagine that I have something which resembles a heart. She was an orphan, without father or mother, and needed me, and that is why I came to love her. Children are so weak that the first comer, even a man like myself, may be their protector. I performed this duty to Cosette. I cannot suppose that so small a thing can be called a good action : but if it be one, well, assume that I had done it. Record that extenuating fact. To-day Cosette leaves my life, and our two roads separate. Henceforth I can do no more for her ; she is Madame Pontmercy ; her providence has changed, and she has gained by the change, so all is well. As for the six hundred thousand francs, you say nothing of them, but I will meet your thought half way : they are a deposit. How was it placed in my hands ? no matter. I give up the deposit, and there is nothing more to ask of me. I complete the restitution by stating my real name, and this too concerns myself, for I am anxious that you should know who I am."

And Jean Valjean looked Marius in the face. All that Marius experienced was tumultuous and incoherent, for certain blasts of the wind of destiny produce such waves in our soul. We have all had such moments of trouble in which everything is dispersed within us : we say the first things that occur to us, which are not always precisely those which we ought to say. There are sudden revelations which we cannot bear, and which intoxicate like a potent wine. Marius was stupefied by the new situation which appeared to him, and spoke to this man almost as if he were angry at the avowal.

" But why," he exclaimed, " do you tell me all this ? who forces you to do so ? you might have kept your secret to yourself. You are neither denounced, nor pursued, nor tracked. You have a motive for making the revelation so voluntarily. Continue ; there is something else : for what purpose do you make this confession ? for what motive ? "

" For what motive ? " Jean Valjean answered in a voice so low and dull that it seemed as if he were speaking to himself rather than Marius. " For what motive ? in truth, does this convict come here to say, I am a convict, well, yes, the motive is a strange one : it is through honesty. The misfortune is that I have a thread in my heart which holds me fast, and it is especially when a man is old that these threads are most solid. The whole of life is undone around, but they resist. Had I been enabled to tear away that thread, break it,

unfasten or cut the knot, and go a long way off, I would be saved and needed only to start. There are diligences in the Rue du Bouloy ; you are happy, and I am off. I tried to break that thread. I pulled at it, it held out, it did not break, and I pulled out my heart with it. Then I said, I cannot live anywhere else, and must remain. Well, yes, but you are right. I am an ass ; why not remain simply ? You offer me a bedroom in the house. Madame Pontmercy loves me dearly, she said to that fauteuil, Hold out your arms to him ; your grandfather asks nothing better than to have me. I suit him, we will live all together, have our meals in common, I will give my arm to Cosette, to Madame Pontmercy, forgive me, but it is habit, we will have only one roof, one table, one fire, the same chimney-corner in winter, the same walk in summer : that is joy, that is happiness, that is everything. We will live in one family."

At this word, Jean Valjean became fierce. He folded his arms, looked at the board at his feet, as if he wished to dig a pit in it, and his voice suddenly became loud.

"In one family ? no. I belong to no family, I do not belong to yours, I do not even belong to the human family. In houses where people are together I am in the way. There are families, but none for me ; I am the unhappy man, I am outside. Had I a father and mother ? I almost doubt it. On the day when I gave you that child in marriage, it was all ended; I saw her happy, and that she was with the man she loved, that there is a kind old gentleman here, a household of two angels, and every joy in this house, and I said to myself, Do not enter. I could lie, it is true, deceive you all, and remain Monsieur Fauchelevent ; so long as it was for her, I was able to lie, but now that it would be for myself I ought not to do so. I only required to be silent, it is true, and all would have gone on. You ask me what compels me to speak ? a strange sort of thing, my conscience. It would have been very easy, however, to hold my tongue ; I spent the night in trying to persuade myself into it. You are shriving me, and what I have just told you is so extraordinary that you have the right to do so. Well, yes, I spent the night in giving myself reasons. I gave myself excellent reasons, I did what I could. But there are two things in which I could not succeed ; I could neither break the string which holds me by the heart, fixed, sealed, and riveted here, nor silence some one who speaks to me in a low voice when I am alone. That is why I have come to confess all to you this morning,—all, or nearly all, for it is useless to tell what only concerns myself, and that I keep to myself. You know the

essential thing. I took my mystery, then, and brought it to you, and ripped it up before your eyes. It was not an easy resolution to form, and I debated the point the whole night. Ah ! you may fancy that I did not say to myself that this was not the Champmathieu affair, that in hiding my name I did no one any harm, that the name of Fauchelevent was given me by Fauchelevent himself in gratitude for a service rendered, and that I might fairly keep it, and that I should be happy in this room which you offer me, that I should not be at all in the way, that I should be in my little corner, and that while you had Cosette I should have the idea of being in the same house with her ; each would have his proportioned happiness. Continuing to be Monsieur Fauchelevent arranged everything. Yes, except my soul ; there would be joy all over me, but the bottom of my soul would remain black. Thus I should have remained Monsieur Fauchelevent. I should have hidden my real face in the presence of your happiness ; I should have had an enigma, and in the midst of your broad sunshine I should have had darkness ; thus, without crying Look out, I should have introduced the hulks to your hearth, I should have sat down at your table with the thought, that if you knew who I was you would expel me ; and let myself be served by the servants, who, had they known, would have said, ‘What a horror !’ I should have touched you with my elbow, which you have a right to feel offended at, and swindled you out of shakes of the hand. There would have been in your house a divided respect between venerable grey hairs and branded grey hairs ; in your most intimate hours, when all hearts formed themselves to each other, when we were all four together, the grandfather, you two, and I, there would have been a stranger there. Hence I, a dead man, would have imposed myself on you who are living, and I should have sentenced her for life. You, Cosette, and I would have been three heads in the green cap ! Do you not shudder ? I am only the most crushed of men, but I should have been the most monstrous. And this crime I should have committed daily ! and this falsehood I should have told daily ! and this face of night I should have worn daily ! and I should have given you a share in my stigma daily, to you, my beloved, to you, my children, to you, my innocents. Holding one’s tongue is nothing ? keeping silence is simple ? no, it is not simple, for there is a silence which lies, and my falsehood, and my fraud, and my indignity, and my cowardice, and my treachery, and my crime, I should have drunk drop by drop ; I should have spat it out, and thus drunk it again ; I should have ended at midnight and begun again

at midday, and my good day would have lied, and my good night would have lied, and I should have slept upon it, and eaten it with my bread ; and I should have looked at Cosette, and responded to the smile of the angel with the smile of the condemned man, and I should have been an abominable scoundrel, and for what purpose ? to be happy. I happy ! have I the right to be happy ? I am out of life, sir."

Jean Valjean stopped, and Marius listened, but such enchainments of ideas and agonies cannot be interrupted. Jean Valjean lowered his voice again, but it was no longer the dull voice, but the sinister voice.

" You ask why I speak ? I am neither denounced, nor pursued, nor tracked, you say. Yes, I am denounced ! Yes, I am pursued ! Yes, I am tracked ! By whom ? by myself. It is I who bar my own passage, and I drag myself along, and I push myself, and I arrest myself, and execute myself, and when a man holds himself he is securely held."

And, seizing his own collar, and dragging it toward Marius, he continued,—

" Look at this fist. Do you not think that it holds this collar so as not to let it go ? Well, conscience is a very different hand ! If you wish to be happy, sir, you must never understand duty ; for so soon as you have understood it it is implacable. People may say that it punishes you for understanding it ; but no, it rewards you for it, for it places you in a hell where you feel God by your side. A man has no sooner torn his entrails than he is at peace with himself."

And, with an indescribable accent, he added,—

" Monsieur Pontmercy, that has no common sense. I am an honest man. It is by degrading myself in your eyes that I raise myself in my own. This has happened to me once before, but it was less painful ; it was nothing. Yes, an honest man. I should not be one if you had, through my fault, continued to esteem me ; but now that you despise me I am so. I have this fatality upon me, that as I am never able to have any but stolen consideration, this consideration humiliates and crushes me internally, and in order that I may respect myself people must despise me. Then I draw myself up. I am a galley-slave who obeys his conscience. I know very well that this is not likely, but what would you have me do ? it is so. I have made engagements with myself, and keep them. There are meetings which bind us. There are accidents which drag us into duty. Look you, Monsieur Pontmercy, things have happened to me in my life."

Jean Valjean made another pause, swallowing his saliva

with an effort, as if his words had a bitter after-taste, and he continued,—

“ When a man has such a horror upon him, he has no right to make others share it unconsciously, he has no right to communicate his plague to them, he has no right to make them slip over his precipice without their perceiving it, he has no right to drag his red cap over them, and no right craftily to encumber the happiness of another man with his misery. To approach those who are healthy and touch them in the darkness with his invisible ulcer is hideous. Fauchelevent may have lent me his name, but I have no right to use it: he may have given it to me, but I was unable to take it. A name is a self. Look you, sir, I have thought a little and read a little, though I am a peasant; and you see that I express myself properly. I explain things to myself, and have carried out my own education. Well, yes; to abstract a name and place oneself under it is dishonest. The letters of the alphabet may be filched like a purse or a watch. To be a false signature in flesh and blood, to be a living false key, to enter among honest folk by picking their lock, never to look, but always to squint, to be internally infamous,—no! no! no! no! It is better to suffer, bleed, weep, tear one’s flesh with one’s nails, pass the nights writhing in agony, and gnaw one’s stomach and soul. That is why I have come to tell you all this,—voluntarily, as you remarked.”

He breathed painfully, and uttered this last remark,—

“ Formerly I stole a loaf in order to live; to-day I will not steal a name in order to live.”

“ To live ! ” Marius interrupted, “ you do not require that name to live.”

“ Ah ! I understand myself,” Jean Valjean replied, raising and drooping his head several times in succession. There was a silence; both held their tongue, sunk as they were in a gulf of thought. Marius was sitting near a table, and supporting the corner of his mouth in one of his fingers. Jean Valjean walked backwards and forwards; he stopped before a glass and remained motionless. Then, as if answering some internal reasoning, he said, as he looked in this glass, in which he did not see himself,—

“ While at present I am relieved.”

He began walking again, and went to the other end of the room. At the moment when he turned he perceived that Marius was watching his walk, and he said to him, with an indescribable accent,—

“ I drag my leg a little. You understand why now.”

Then he turned round full to Marius.

"And now, sir, imagine this. I have said nothing. I have remained Monsieur Fauchelevent. I have taken my place in your house. I am one of your family. I am in my room. I come down to breakfast in my slippers; at night we go to the play, all three. I accompany Madame Pontmercy to the Tuilleries and to the Place Royale; we are together and you believe me your equal. One fine day I am here, you are there. We are talking and laughing, and you hear a voice cry this name,—Jean Valjean! and then that fearful hand, the police, issues from the shadow, and suddenly tears off my mask!"

He was silent again. Marius had risen with a shudder, and Jean Valjean continued,—

"What do you say to that?"

Marius' silence replied, and Jean Valjean continued,—

"You see very well that I did right in not holding my tongue. Be happy, be in heaven, be the angel of an angel, be in the sunshine and content yourself with it, and do not trouble yourself as to the way in which a poor condemned man opens his heart and does his duty; you have a wretched man before you, sir."

Marius slowly crossed the room, and when he was by Jean Valjean's side offered him his hand. But Marius was compelled to take this hand which did not offer itself. Jean Valjean let him do so, and it seemed to Marius that he was pressing a hand of marble.

"My grandfather has friends," said Marius. "I will obtain your pardon."

"It is useless," Jean Valjean replied; "I am supposed to be dead, and that is sufficient. The dead are not subjected to surveillance, and are supposed to rot quietly. Death is the same thing as pardon."

And liberating the hand which Marius held, he added with a sort of inexorable dignity,—

"Moreover, duty, my duty, is the friend to whom I have recourse, and I only need one pardon, that of my conscience."

At this moment the door opened gently at the other end of the drawing-room, and Cosette's head appeared in the crevice. Only her sweet face was visible. Her hair was in admirable confusion, and her eyelids were still swollen with sleep. She made the movement of a bird thrusting its head out of the nest, looked first at her husband then at Jean Valjean, and cried to them laughingly—it looked like a smile issuing from a rose,—

"I will bet that you are talking politics. How stupid that is, instead of being with me!"

Jean Valjean started.

"Cosette," Marius stammered, and he stopped. They looked like two culprits; Cosette, radiant, continued to look at them both, and there were in her eyes gleams of Paradise.

"I have caught you in the act," Cosette said, "I just heard through this, Father Fauchelevent saying, Conscience, doing one's duty. That is politics, and I will have none of it. People must not talk politics on the very next day, it is not right."

"You are mistaken, Cosette," Marius replied, "we are talking of business. We are talking about the best way of investing your six hundred thousand francs."

"I am coming," Cosette interrupted. "Do you want me here?"

And resolutely passing through the door, she entered the drawing-room. She was dressed in a large combing gown with a thousand folds and large sleeves, which descended from her neck to her feet. There are in the golden skies of old gothic paintings, these charming bags to place an angel in. She contemplated herself from head to foot in a large mirror, and then exclaimed with an ineffable outburst of ecstasy,—

"There were once upon a time a king and queen. Oh! how delighted I am!"

This said, she courtesied to Marius and Jean Valjean.

"Then," she said, "I am going to install myself near you in an easy chair; we shall breakfast in half an hour. You will say all you like, for I know very well that gentlemen must talk, and I will be very good."

Marius took her by the arm and said to her, lovingly,—

"We are talking about business."

"By the way," Cosette answered, "I have opened my window, and a number of sparrows (pierrots) have just entered the garden. Birds, not masks. To-day is Ash Wednesday, but not for the birds."

"I tell you that we are talking of business, so go, my little Cosette, leave us for a moment. We are talking figures, and they would only annoy you."

"You have put on a charming cravat this morning, Marius. You are very coquettish, Monseigneur. No, they will not annoy me."

"I assure you that they will."

"No, since it is you, I shall not understand you, but I shall hear you. When a woman hears voices she loves, she does not require to understand the words they say. To be together is all I want, and I shall stay with you,—there!"

"You are my beloved Cosette! impossible."

"Impossible!"

"Yes."

"Very good," Cosette remarked, "I should have told you some news. I should have told you that grandpapa is still asleep, that your aunt is at mass, that the chimney of my papa Fauchelevent's room smokes, that Nicolette has sent for the chimney-sweep, that Nicolette and Toussaint have already quarrelled, and that Nicolette ridicules Toussaint's stammering. Well, you shall know nothing. Ah, it is impossible? you shall see, sir, that in my turn I shall say, It is impossible. Who will be caught then? I implore you, my little Marius, to let me stay with you two."

"I assure you that we must be alone."

"Well, am I anybody?"

Jean Valjean did not utter a word, and Cosette turned to him.

"In the first place, father, I insist on your coming and kissing me. What do you mean by saying nothing, instead of taking my part? Did one ever see a father like that? That will show you how unhappy my marriage is, for my husband beats me. Come and kiss me at once."

Jean Valjean approached her, and Cosette turned to Marius.

"I make a face at you."

Then she offered her forehead to Jean Valjean, who moved a step towards her. All at once Cosette recoiled.

"Father, you are pale, does your arm pain you?"

"It is cured," said Jean Valjean.

"Have you slept badly?"

"No."

"Are you sad?"

"No."

"Kiss me. If you are well, if you sleep soundly, if you are happy, I will not scold you."

And she again offered him her forehead, and Jean Valjean set a kiss on this forehead, upon which there was a heavenly reflection.

"Smile."

Jean Valjean obeyed, but it was the smile of a ghost.

"Now, defend me against my husband."

"Cosette—" said Marius.

"Be angry, father, and tell him I am to remain. You can talk before me. You must think me very foolish. What you are saying is very astonishing then! business, placing money

in a bank, that is a great thing. Men make mysteries of nothing. I mean to say I am very pretty this morning. Marius, look at me."

And with an adorable shrug of the shoulders and an exquisite pout, she looked at Marius. Something like a flash passed between these two beings, and they cared little about a third party being present.

"I love you," said Marius.

"I adore you," said Cosette.

And they irresistibly fell into each other's arms.

"And now," Cosette continued, as she smoothed a crease in her dressing-gown, with a little triumphant pout, "I remain."

"No," Marius replied, imploringly, "we have something to finish."

"Again, no?"

Marius assumed a serious tone.

"I assure you, Cosette, that it is impossible."

"Ah, you are putting on your man's voice, sir; very good, I will go. You did not support me, father; and so you, my hard husband, and you, my dear papa, are tyrants. I shall go and tell grandpapa. If you believe that I intend to return and talk platitudes to you, you are mistaken. I am proud, and I intend to wait for you at present. You will see how wearisome it will be without me. I am going, very good."

And she left the room, but two seconds after the door opened again, her fresh, rosy face passed once again between the two folding doors, and she cried to them,—

"I am very angry."

The door closed again, and darkness returned. It was like a straggling sunbeam, which, without suspecting it, had suddenly traversed the night. Marius assured himself that the door was really closed.

"Poor Cosette," he muttered, "when she learns—"

At these words Jean Valjean trembled all over, and he fixed his haggard eyes on Marius.

"Cosette! oh yes, it is true. You will tell Cosette about it. It is fair. Stay, I did not think of that. A man has strength for one thing, but not for another. I implore you, sir, I conjure you, sir, give me your most sacred word, do not tell her. Is it not sufficient for you to know it? I was able to tell it of my own accord, without being compelled. I would have told it to the universe, to the whole world, and I should not have cared; but she, she does not know what it is, and it would horrify her. A convict, what! you would be obliged

to explain to her ; tell her, It is a man who has been to the galleys. She saw the chain-gang once ; oh, my God ! ”

He sank into a chair and buried his face in his hands ; it could not be heard, but from the heaving of his shoulders it could be seen that he was weeping. They were silent tears, terrible tears. There is a choking in a sob ; a species of convulsion seized on him, he threw himself back in the chair, letting his arms hang, and displaying to Marius his face bathed in tears, and Marius heard him mutter so low that his voice seemed to come from a bottomless abyss, “ Oh ! I would like to die.”

“ Be at your ease,” Marius said, “ I will keep your secret to myself.”

And, less affected than perhaps he ought to have been, but compelled for more than an hour to listen to unexpected horrors, gradually seeing a convict taking M. Fauchelevent’s place, gradually overcome by this mournful reality, and led by the natural state of the situation to notice the gap which had formed between himself and this man, Marius added,—

“ It is impossible for me not to say a word about the trust money which you have so faithfully and honestly given up. That is an act of probity, and it is but fair that a reward should be given you ; fix the sum yourself, and it shall be paid you. Do not fear to fix it very high.”

“ I thank you, sir,” Jean Valjean replied gently.

He remained pensive for a moment, mechanically passing the end of his fore-finger over his thumb-nail, and then raised his voice,—

“ All is nearly finished ; there is only one thing left me.”

“ What is it ? ”

Jean Valjean had a species of supreme agitation, and voicelessly, almost breathlessly, he stammered, rather than said,—

“ Now that you know, do you, sir, who are the master, believe that I ought not see Cosette again ? ”

“ I believe that it would be better,” Marius replied coldly.

“ I will not see her again,” Jean Valjean murmured. And he walked toward the door ; he placed his hand upon the handle, the door opened, Jean Valjean was going to pass out, when he suddenly closed it again, then opened the door again, and returned to Marius. He was no longer pale, but livid, and in his eyes was a sort of tragic flame, instead of tears. His voice had grown strangely calm again.

"Stay, sir," he said, "if you like I will come to see her, for I assure you that I desire it greatly. If I had not longed to see Cosette I should not have made you the confession I have done, but have gone away; but wishing to remain at the spot where Cosette is, and continue to see her, I was obliged to tell you everything honestly. You follow my reasoning, do you not? it is a thing easy to understand. Look you, I have had her with me for nine years: we lived at first in that hovel on the boulevard, then in the convent, and then near the Luxembourg. It was there that you saw her for the first time, and you remember her blue plush bonnet. Next we went to the district of the Invalides, where there were a railway and a garden, the Rue Plumet. I lived in a little back-yard where I could hear her pianoforte. Such was my life, and we never separated. That lasted nine years and seven months; I was like her father, and she was my child. I do not know whether you understand me, M. Pontmercy, but it would be difficult to go away now, see her no more, speak to her no more, and have nothing left. If you have no objection I will come and see Cosette every now and then, but not too often, and I will not remain long. You can tell them to show me into the little room on the ground-floor; I would certainly come in by the back door, which is used by the servants, but that might cause surprise, so it is better, I think, for me to come by the front door. Really, sir, I should like to see Cosette a little, but as rarely as you please. Put yourself in my place, I have only that left. And then, again, we must be careful, and if I did not come at all it would have a bad effect, and appear singular. For instance, what I can do is to come in the evening, when it is beginning to grow dark."

"You can come every evening," said Marius, "and Cosette will expect you."

"You are kind, sir," said Jean Valjean.

Marius bowed to Jean Valjean, happiness accompanied despair to the door, and these two men parted.

CHAPTER LXX.

THE OBSCURITY WHICH A REVELATION MAY CONTAIN.

MARIUS was overwhelmed ; the sort of estrangement which he had ever felt for the man with whom he saw Cosette was henceforth explained. There was in this person something enigmatic, against which his instinct warned him. This enigma was the most hideous of shames, the galleys. This M. Fauchelevent was Jean Valjean, the convict. To find suddenly such a secret in the midst of his happiness is like discovering a scorpion in a turtle-dove's nest. Was the happiness of Marius and Cosette in future condensed to this proximity ? was it an accomplished fact ? did the acceptance of this man form part of the consummated marriage ? could nothing else be done ? Had Marius also married the convict ? Although a man may be crowned with light and joy, though he be enjoying the grand hour of life's purple, happy love, such shocks would compel even the archangel in his ecstasy, even the demi-god in his glory, to shudder.

As ever happens in sudden transformation-scenes of this nature, Marius asked himself whether he ought not to reproach himself ? Had he failed in divination ? had he been deficient in prudence ? Had he voluntarily been headstrong ? slightly so, perhaps. Had he entered, without taking sufficient precaution to light up the vicinity, upon this love-adventure, which resulted in his marriage with Cosette ? He verified—it is thus, by a series of verifications of ourselves on ourselves, that life is gradually corrected—he verified, we say, the visionary and chimerical side of his nature, a sort of internal cloud peculiar to many organizations, and which in the paroxysms of passion and grief expands, as the temperature of the soul changes, and invades the entire man to such an extent that he merely becomes a conscience enveloped in a fog. We have more than once indicated this characteristic element in Marius' individuality. He remembered that during the intoxication of his love in the Rue Plumet, during those six or seven ecstatic weeks, he had not even spoken to Cosette about the drama in the Gorbeau hovel, during which the victim was so strangely silent both in the struggle and eventual escape. How was it that he had not spoken to Cosette about it ? and yet it was so close and so frightful ? how was it that he had not even mentioned the Thénardiers, and

especially on the day when he met Eponine? he found almost a difficulty in explaining to himself now his silence at that period, but he was able to account for it. He remembered his confusion, his intoxication for Cosette, his love absorbing everything, the carrying off of one by the other into the ideal world, and perhaps, too, as the imperceptible amount of reason mingled with that violent and charming state of the mind, a vague and dull instinct to hide and efface in his memory that formidable adventure with which he feared contact, in which he wished to play no part, from which he stood aloof, and of which he could not be narrator or witness without being an accuser. Moreover, these few weeks had been a flash, and they had formed him for nothing, save loving. In short, when all was revolved, and everything examined, supposing that he had described the Gorbeau trap to Cosette, had mentioned the Thénardiers to her, what would have been the consequence, even if he had discovered that Jean Valjean was a convict; would that have changed him, Marius or his Cosette? would he have drawn back? would he have loved her less? would he have refused to marry her? No. Would it have made any change in what had happened? No. There was nothing, therefore, to regret, nothing to reproach, and all was well. There is a God for those drunkards who are called lovers, and Marius had blindly followed the road which he had selected with his eyes open. Love had bandaged his eyes to lead him whither?—to paradise.

But this paradise was henceforth complicated by an infernal proximity, and the old estrangement of Marius for this man, for this Fauchelevent who had become Jean Valjean, was at present mingled with horror, but in this horror, let us say it, there was some pity, and even a certain degree of surprise. This robber, this relapsed robber, had given up a deposit, and what deposit? six hundred thousand francs. He alone held the secret of that deposit, he could have kept it all, but he gave it all up. Moreover, he had revealed his situation of his own accord, nothing compelled him to do so, and if he, Marius, knew who he was it was through himself. There was in this confession more than the acceptance of humiliation, there was the acceptance of peril. For a condemned man a mask is not a mask, but a shelter, and he had renounced that shelter. A false name is a security, and he had thrown away that false name. He, the galley-slave, could conceal himself for ever in an honest family, and he had resisted that temptation, and for what motive? through scruples of conscience. He had explained himself with the irresistible accent of truth. In short, whoever this Jean Valjean might be, his was incontestably a

conscience which was being awakened. Some mysterious rehabilitation had been begun, and, according to all appearances, scruples had been master of this man for a long time past. Such attacks of justice and honesty are not peculiar to vulgar natures, and an awakening of the conscience is greatness of soul. Jean Valjean was sincere, and this sincerity, visible, palpable, irrefragable, and evident in the grief which it caused him, rendered his statements valuable, and gave authority to all that this man said. Here, for Marius, was a strange inversion of situations. What issued from M. Fauchelevent? distrust; what was disengaged from Jean Valjean? confidence. In the mysterious balance-sheet of this Jean Valjean which Marius mentally drew up, he verified the credit, he verified the debit, and tried to arrive at a balance. But all this was as in a storm, Marius striving to form a distinct idea of this man, and pursuing Jean Valjean, so to speak, to the bottom of his thoughts, lost him, and found him again in a fatal mist.

The honest restoration of the trust-money and the probity of the confession were good, and formed as it were a break in the cloud; but then the cloud became black again. However confused Marius' reminiscences might be, some shadows still returned to him. What, after all, was that adventure in the Jondrette garret? why on the arrival of the police did that man, instead of complaining, escape? here Marius found the answer,—because this man was a convict who had broken his ban. Another question, Why did this man come to the barricade? for at present Marius distinctly saw again that recollection, which reappeared in his emotions like sympathetic ink before the fire. This man was at the barricade, and did not fight, what did he want there? Before this question a spectre rose, and gave the answer, Javert. Marius perfectly remembered now the mournful vision of Jean Valjean dragging the bound Javert out of the barricade, and heard again behind the angle of the little Mondétour lane the frightful pistol-shot. There was, probably, a hatred between this spy and this galley-slave, and one annoyed the other. Jean Valjean went to the barricade to revenge himself, he arrived late, and was probably aware that Javert was a prisoner there. Corsican Vendetta has penetrated certain lower strata of society, and is the law with them; it is so simple that it does not astonish minds which have half returned to virtue, and their hearts are so constituted that a criminal, when on the path of repentance, may be scrupulous as to a robbery and not so as to a vengeance. Jean Valjean had killed Javert, or, at least, that seemed evident. The last question of all admitted of no reply, and

this question Marius felt like a pair of pincers. How was it that the existence of Jean Valjean had so long elbowed that of Cosette? What was this gloomy sport of Providence which had brought this man and this child in contact? are there chains for two forged in heaven, and does God take pleasure in coupling the angel with the demon? a crime and an innocence can, then, be chamber companions in the mysterious hulks of misery? In that defile of condemned men which is called human destiny, two foreheads may pass along side by side, one simple, the other formidable—one all bathed in the divine whiteness of dawn, the other eternally branded? who can have determined this inexplicable approximation? in what way, in consequence of what prodigy, could a community of life have been established between this celestial child and this condemned old man? Who could have attached the lamb to the wolf, and, even more incomprehensible still, the wolf to the lamb? for the wolf loved the lamb, the ferocious being adored the weak being, and for nine years the angel had leant on the monster for support. The childhood and maidenhood of Cosette and her virgin growth toward life and light had been protected by this deformed devotion. Here questions exfoliated themselves, if we may employ the expression, into countless enigmas; abysses opened at the bottom of abysses, and Marius could no longer bend over Jean Valjean without feeling a dizziness: what could this man-precipice be? The old genesiacal symbols are eternal: in human society, such as it now exists until a greater light shall change it, there are even two men, one superior, the other subterranean; the one who holds to good is Abel, the one who holds to bad is Cain. What was this tender Cain? what was this bandit religiously absorbed in the adoration of a virgin, watching over her, bringing her up, guarding her, dignifying her, and, though himself impure, surrounding her with purity? What was this cloaca which had venerated this innocence so greatly as not to leave a spot upon it? what was this Valjean carrying on the education of Cosette? what was this figure of darkness, whose sole care it was to preserve from every shadow and every cloud the rising of a star?

That was Jean Valjean's secret; that was also God's secret, and Marius recoiled before this double secret. The one, to some extent, reassured him about the other, for God was as visible in this adventure as was Jean Valjean. God has His instruments, and employs whom he likes as tool, and is not responsible to him. Do we know how God sets to work? Jean Valjean had laboured on Cosette, and had to some extent formed

her mind, that was incontestable. Well, what then? The workman was horrible, but the work was admirable, and God produces his miracles as he thinks proper. He had constructed that charming Cosette and employed Jean Valjean on the job, and it had pleased him to choose this strange assistant. What explanation have we to ask of Him? is it the first time that manure has helped spring to produce the rose? Marius gave himself these answers, and declared to himself that they were good. On all the points which we have indicated he had not dared to press Jean Valjean, though he did not confess to himself that he dared not. He adored Cosette, he possessed Cosette; Cosette was splendidly pure, and that was sufficient for him. What enlightenment did he require when Cosette was a light? does light need illumination? He had everything; what more could he desire? is not everything enough? Jean Valjean's personal affairs in no way concerned him, and in bending down over the fatal shadow of this wretched man he clung to his solemn declaration, *I am nothing to Cosette; ten years ago I did not know that she existed.* Jean Valjean was a passer-by; he had said so himself. Well then, he passed, and, whoever he might be, his part was played out. Henceforth Marius would have to perform the functions of Providence toward Cosette; she had found again in ether her equal, her lover, her husband, her celestial male. In flying away, Cosette, winged and transfigured, left behind her on earth her empty and hideous chrysalis, Jean Valjean. In whatever circle of ideas Marius might turn, he always came back to a certain horror of Jean Valjean; a sacred horror, perhaps, for, as we have stated, he felt a *quid divinum* in this man. But, though it was so, and whatever extenuating circumstances he might seek, he was always compelled to fall back on this: he was a convict, that is to say, a being who has not even a place on the social ladder, being beneath the lowest rung. After the last of men comes the convict, who is no longer, so to speak, in the likeness of his fellow-men. The law has deprived him of the entire amount of humanity which it can strip off a man. Marius, in penal matters, democrat though he was, was still at the inexorable system, and he entertained all the ideas of the law about those whom the law strikes. He had not yet made every progress, we are forced to say; he had not yet learned to distinguish between what is written by man and what is written by God, between the law and the right. He had examined and weighed the claim which man sets up to dispose of the irrevocable, the irreparable, and the word *vindicta* was not repulsive to him. He considered it simple that certain breaches of the written law

should be followed by eternal penalties, and he accepted social condemnation as a civilizing process. He was still at this point, though infallibly certain to advance at a later date, for his nature was good, and entirely composed of latent progress.

In this medium of ideas Jean Valjean appeared to him deformed and repelling, for he was the punished man, the convict. This word was to him like the sound of the trumpet of the last judgment, and after regarding Jean Valjean for a long time his last gesture was to turn away his head—*vade retrò*. Marius, we must recognize the fact and lay a stress on it, while questioning Jean Valjean to such an extent that Jean Valjean himself said, *You are shriving me*, had not, however, asked him two or three important questions. It was not that they had not presented themselves to his mind, but he had been afraid of them. The Jondrette garret? the barricade? Javert? Who knew where the revelations might have stopped? Jean Valjean did not seem the man to recoil, and who knows whether Marius, after urging him on, might not have wished to check him? In certain supreme conjunctures has it not happened to all of us that after asking a question we have stopped our ears, in order not to hear the answer? a man is specially guilty of such an act of cowardice when he is in love. It is not wise to drive sinister situations into a corner, especially when the indissoluble side of our own life is fatally mixed up with them. What a frightful light might issue from Jean Valjean's desperate explanations, and who knows whether that hideous brightness might not have been reflected on Cosette? Who knows whether a sort of infernal gleam might not have remained on that angel's brow? Fatality knows such complications in which innocence itself is branded with crime by the fatal law of colouring reflections, and the purest faces may retain for ever the impression of a horrible vicinity. Whether rightly or wrongly, Marius was terrified, for he already knew too much, and he had rather to deafen than to enlighten himself. He wildly bore off Cosette in his arms, closing his eyes upon Jean Valjean. This man belonged to the night, the living and terrible night; how could he dare to seek its foundation? It is a horrible thing to question the shadow, for who knows what it will answer? The dawn might be eternally blackened by it. In this state of mind it was a crushing perplexity for Marius to think that henceforth this man would have any contact with Cosette; and he now almost reproached himself for not having asked these formidable questions before which he had recoiled, and from which an implacable and definitive decision might have issued. He considered himself too kind, too gentle, and, let us

say it, too weak ; and the weakness had led him to make a fatal concession. He had allowed himself to be affected, and had done wrong ; he ought simply and purely to have rejected Jean Valjean. Jean Valjean was an incendiary, and he ought to have freed his house from the presence of this man. He was angry with himself, he was angry with that whirlwind of emotions which had deafened, blinded, and carried him away. He was dissatisfied with himself.

What was he to do now ? the visits of Jean Valjean were most deeply repulsive to him. Of what use was it that this man should come to his house ? what did he want here ? Here he refused to investigate the matter, he refused to study ; and he was unwilling to probe his own heart. He had promised, he had allowed himself to be drawn into a promise : Jean Valjean held that promise, and he must keep his word even with a convict,—above all with a convict. Still his first duty was toward Cosette ; and a word, a repulsion, which overcame everything else, caused him a loathing. Marius confusedly revolved all these ideas in his mind, passing from one to the other, and shaken by all. Hence arose a deep trouble, which it was not easy to conceal from Cosette, but love is a talent, and Marius succeeded in doing it. However, he asked, without any apparent motive, some questions of Cosette, who was as candid as a dove is white, and suspected nothing ; he spoke to her of her childhood and her youth, and he convinced himself more and more that this convict had been to Cosette as good, paternal, and respectful as a man can be. Everything of which Marius had caught a glimpse and supposed, was real,—this sinister nettle had loved and protected this lily.

CHAPTER LXXI.

THE GROUND-FLOOR ROOM.

ON the morrow, at night-fall, Jean Valjean tapped at the gateway of the Gillenormand mansion, and it was Basque who received him. Basque was in the yard at the appointed time, as if he had had his orders. It sometimes happens that people say to a servant, “ You will watch for Mr So-and-So’s arrival.” Basque, without waiting for Jean Valjean to come up to him, said,—

"Monsieur le Baron has instructed me to ask you, sir, whether you wish to go up-stairs or stay down here?"

"Stay down here," Jean Valjean replied.

Basque, who, however, was perfectly respectful in his manner, opened the door of the ground-floor room, and said, "I will go and inform her ladyship." The room which Jean Valjean entered was a damp, arched, basement room, employed as a cellar at times, looking out on the street, with a flooring of red tiles, and badly lighted by an iron-barred window. This room was not one of those which are harassed by the broom and mop, and the dust was quiet there. No persecution of the spiders had been organized; and a fine web, extensively drawn out, quite black, and adorned with dead flies, formed a wheel on one of the window panes. The room, which was small and low-ceilinged, was furnished with a pile of empty bottles collected in a corner. The wall, covered with a yellow-ochre wash, crumbled off in large patches; at the end was a mantel-piece of paneled black wood, with a narrow shelf, and a fire was lighted in it, which indicated that Jean Valjean's reply *remain down here* had been calculated on. Two chairs were placed, one in each chimney-corner, and between the chairs was spread, in guise of carpet, an old bed-room rug, which displayed more cord than wool. The room was illumined by the flickering of the fire, and the twilight through the window. Jean Valjean was fatigued, for several days he had not eaten or slept, and he fell into one of the arm-chairs. Basque returned, placed a lighted candle on the mantel-piece, and withdrew. Jean Valjean, who was sitting with hanging head, did not notice either Basque or the candle, till all at once he started up, for Cosette was behind him: he had not seen her come in, but he felt that she was doing so. He turned round and contemplated her; she was adorably lovely. But what he gazed at with this profound glance was not the beauty, but the soul.

"Well, father," Cosette exclaimed, "I knew that you were singular, but I could never have expected this." What an idea! Marius told me that it was your wish to see me here."

"Yes, it is."

"I expected that answer, and I warn you that I am going to have a scene with you. Let us begin with the beginning: kiss me, father."

And she offered her cheek, but Jean Valjean remained motionless.

"You do not stir, I mark the fact! it is the attitude of a

culprit. But I do not care, I forgive you. Christ said, ‘ Offer the other cheek ; ’ here it is.”

And she offered the other cheek, but Jean Valjean did not stir ; it seemed as if his feet were riveted to the floor.

“ Things are growing serious,” said Cosette. “ What have I done to you ? I am offended, and you must make it up with me ; you will dine with us ? ”

“ I have dined.”

“ That is not true, and I will have you scolded by M. Gille-normand. Grandfathers are made to lay down the law to fathers. Come, go with me to the drawing-room. At once.”

“ Impossible.”

Cosette here lost a little ground ; she ceased to order and began questioning.

“ But why ? and you choose the ugliest room in the house to see me in. It is horrible here.”

“ You know, Cosette—”

Jean Valjean broke off—

“ You know, madame, that I am peculiar, and have my fan-cies.”

“ Madame—you know—more novelties ; what does this all mean ? ”

Jean Valjean gave her that heart-broken smile to which he sometimes had recourse.

“ You wished to be a lady, and are one.”

“ Not for you, father.”

“ Do not call me father.”

“ What ? ”

“ Call me Monsieur Jean, or Jean, if you like.”

“ You are no longer father ? I am no longer Cosette ? Monsieur Jean ? why, what does it mean ? These are revolu-tions. What has happened ? Look me in the face, if you can. And you will not live with us ! and you will not accept our bed-room ! What have I done to offend you ? Oh, what have I done ? there must be something.”

“ Nothing.”

“ In that case then ? ”

“ All is as usual.”

“ Why do you change your name ? ”

“ You have changed yours.”

He smiled the same smile again, and added,—

“ Since you are Madame Pontmercy, I may fairly be Mon-sieur Jean.”

“ I do not understand anything, and all this is idiotic. I will ask my husband’s leave for you to be Monsieur Jean, and

I hope that he will not consent. You cause me great sorrow, and though you may have whims, you have no right to make your little Cosette grieve. That is wrong, and you have no right to be naughty, for you are so good."

As he made no reply, she seized both his hands eagerly, and with an irresistible movement raising them to her face, she pressed them against her neck under her chin, which is a profound sign of affection.

"Oh," she said, "be kind to me." And she continued,—

"This is what I call being kind; to behave yourself, come and live here, for there are birds here as in the Rue Plumet; to live with us, leave that hole in the Rue de l'Homme Armé, give us no more riddles to guess; to be like everybody else, dine with us, breakfast with us, and be my father."

He removed her hands,—

"You no longer want a father, as you have a husband."

Cosette broke out,—

"I no longer want a father! things like that have no common sense, and I really do not know what to say."

"If Toussaint were here," Jean Valjean continued, like a man seeking authorities and who clings to every branch, "she would be the first to allow that I have always had strange ways of my own. There is nothing new in it, for I always loved my dark corner."

"But it is cold here, and we cannot see distinctly, and it is abominable to wish to be Monsieur Jean, and I shall not allow you to call me Madame."

"As I was coming along just now," Jean Valjean replied, "I saw a very pretty piece of furniture at a cabinet-maker's in the Rue St Louis. If I were a pretty woman, I should treat myself to it. It is a very nice toilette table in the present fashion, made of rosewood, I think you call it, and inlaid. There is a rather large glass with drawers, and it is very nice."

"Hou! the ugly bear!" Cosette replied. And clenching her teeth, and parting her lips in the most graceful way possible, she blew at Jean Valjean; it was a grace copying a cat.

"I am furious," she went on, "and since yesterday you have all put me in a passion. I do not understand it at all; you do not defend me against Marius, Marius does not take my part against you, and I am all alone. I have a nice room prepared, and if I could have put the bon Dieu in it, I would have done so; but my room is left on my hands and my lodger deserts me. I order Nicolette to prepare a nice little dinner, and — they will not touch your dinner, Madame. And my father Fauchelevent wishes me to call him Monsieur Jean, and

that I should receive him in a frightful old, ugly, mildewed cellar, in which the walls wear a beard, and empty bottles represent the looking-glasses, and spiders' webs the curtains. I allow that you are a singular man, it is your way, but a truce is granted to a newly-married woman; and you ought not to have begun to be singular again so soon. You are going to be very satisfied, then, in your Rue de l'Homme Armé; well, I was very wretched there. What have I done to offend you? you cause me great sorrow. Fie!"

And, suddenly growing serious, she looked intently at Jean Valjean and added,—

" You are angry with me for being happy, is that it?"

Simplicity sometimes penetrates unconsciously very deep, and this question, simple for Cosette, was profound for Jean Valjean. Cosette wished to scratch, but she tore. Jean Valjean turned pale, he remained for a moment without answering, and then murmured with an indescribable accent, and speaking to himself,—

" Her happiness was the object of my life, and at present God may order my departure. Cosette, thou art happy, and my course is run."

" Ah! you said *thou* to me," Cosette exclaimed, and leaped on his neck.

Jean Valjean wildly strained her to his heart, for he felt as if he were almost taking her back again.

" Thank you, father," Cosette said to him.

The excitement was getting too painful for Jean Valjean; he gently withdrew himself from Cosette's arms, and took up his hat.

" Well?" said Cosette.

Jean Valjean replied,—

" I am going to leave you, Madame, as you will be missed." And on the threshold he added,—

" I said to you *thou*; tell your husband that it shall not happen again. Forgive me."

Jean Valjean left Cosette stupefied by this enigmatical leave-taking.

CHAPTER LXXII.

OTHER BACKWARD STEPS.

THE next day Jean Valjean came at the same hour, and Cosette asked him no questions, was no longer astonished, no longer exclaimed that it was cold, no longer alluded to the drawing-room ; she avoided saying either father or Monsieur Jean. She allowed herself to be called Madame ; there was only a diminution of her delight perceptible, and she would have been sad, had sorrow been possible. It is probable that she had held with Marius one of those conversations in which the beloved man says what he wishes, explains nothing, and satisfies the beloved woman ; for the curiosity of lovers does not extend far beyond their love. The basement room had been furbished up a little ; Basque had suppressed the bottles, and Nicolette the spiders. Every following day brought Jean Valjean back at the same hour ; he came daily, as he had not the strength to take Marius' permission otherwise than literally. Marius arranged so as to be absent at the hour when Jean Valjean came, and the house grew accustomed to M. Fauchelevent's new mode of behaving. Toussaint helped in it; *my master was always so*, she repeated. The grandfather issued this decree—He is an original—and everything was said. Moreover, at the age of ninety no connection is possible ; everything is juxtaposition, and a new-comer is in the way ; there is no place for him, for habits are unalterably formed. M. Fauchelevent, M. Tranchelevent, Father Gillenormand desired nothing better than to get rid of “that gentleman,” and added, “Nothing is more common than such originals. They do all sorts of strange things without any motive. The Marquis de Canoples did worse, for he bought a palace in order to live in the garret.”

No one caught a glimpse of the sinister reality, and in fact who could have divined such a thing ? There are marshes like this in India ; the water seems extraordinary, inexplicable, rippling when there is no breeze, and agitated when it ought to be calm. People look at the surface of this ebullition which has no cause, and do not suspect the hydra dragging itself along at the bottom. Many men have in this way a secret monster, an evil which they nourish, a dragon that gnaws them, a despair that dwells in their night. Such a man resembles others, comes and goes, and no one knows that he has within him a frightful parasitic pain with a thousand teeth, which dwells in

the wretch and kills him. They do not know that this man is a gulf; he is stagnant but deep. From time to time a trouble which no one understands is produced on his surface; a mysterious ripple forms, then fades away, then reappears; a bubble rises and bursts. It is a slight thing, but it is terrible, for it is the respiration of the unknown beast. Certain strange habits, such as, arriving at the hour when others go away, hiding oneself when others show themselves, wearing on all occasions what may be called the wall-coloured cloak, seeking the solitary walk, preferring the deserted street, not mixing in conversation, avoiding crowds and festivities, appearing to be comfortably off and living poorly, having, rich though one is, one's key in one's pocket, and one's candle in the porter's lodge, entering by the small door, and going up the back-stairs—all these insignificant singularities, ripples, air-bubbles, and fugitive marks on the surface, frequently come from a formidable pit.

Several weeks passed thus; a new life gradually seized on Cosette; the relations which marriage creates, visits, the management of the household, and pleasures, that great business. The pleasures of Cosette were not costly, they consisted in only one, being with Marius. To go out with him, remain at home with him, was the great occupation of her life. It was for them an ever novel joy to go out arm in arm, in the sunshine, in the open streets, without hiding themselves, in the face of everybody, both alone. Cosette had one vexation, Toussaint could not agree with Nicolette (for the welding of the two old maids was impossible), and left. The grandfather was quite well; Marius had a few briefs now and then; Aunt Gillenormand peacefully lived with the married pair that lateral life which sufficed her, and Jean Valjean came daily. The Madame and the Monsieur Jean, however, made him different to Cosette, and the care he had himself taken to detach himself from her succeeded. She was more and more gay, and less and less affectionate, and yet she loved him dearly still, and he felt it. One day she suddenly said to him, " You were my father, you are no longer my father; you were my uncle, you are no longer my uncle; you were Monsieur Fauchelevent, and are now Jean. Who are you then? I do not like all this. If I did not know you to be so good, I should be afraid of you." He still lived in the Rue de l'Homme Armé, as he could not resolve to remove from the quarter in which Cosette lived. At first he only stayed a few minutes with Cosette, and then went away, but by degrees he grew into the habit of making his visits longer. It might be said that he took advantage of the lengthening days; he arrived sooner and went away later. One day, the word

father slipped over Cosette's lips, and a gleam of joy lit up Jean Valjean's old solemn face, but he chided her; "Say Jean."

"Ah, that is true," she replied, with a burst of laughter, "Monsieur Jean."

"That is right," he said, and he turned away that she might not see the tears in his eyes.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

THEY REMEMBER THE GARDEN IN THE RUE PLUMET.

THIS was the last occasion, and after this last flare total extinction took place. There was no more familiarity, no more good-day with a kiss, and never again that so deeply tender word "father;" he had been, at his own request and with his own complicity, expelled from all those joys in succession, and he underwent this misery, that, after losing Cosette entirely on one day, he was then obliged to lose her again bit by bit. The eye eventually grows accustomed to cellar light, and he found it enough to have an apparition of Cosette daily. His whole life was concentrated in that hour; he sat down by her side, looked at her in silence, or else talked to her about former years, her childhood, the convent, and her little friends of those days. One afternoon—it was an early day in April, already warm, but still fresh, the moment of the sun's great gaiety—the gardens that surrounded Marius' and Cosette's windows were rousing from their slumber, the hawthorn was about to bourgeon, a jewelry of wall-flowers was displayed on the old wall, there was on the grass a fairy carpet of daisies and buttercups, the white butterflies were springing forth, and the wind, that minstrel of the eternal wedding, was trying in the trees the first notes of that great auroral symphony which the old poets called the renewal—Marius said to Cosette, "We said that we would go and see our garden in the Rue Plumet again. Come, we must not be ungrateful." And they flew off like two swallows toward the spring. This garden in the Rue Plumet produced on them the effect of a dawn, for they already had behind them in life something that resembled the spring-time of their love. The house in the Rue Plumet, being taken on lease, still belonged to Cosette; they went to this garden and house, found themselves again, and forgot themselves there. In the evening Jean Valjean went to the Rue des Filles du Calvaire at the usual hour.

"My lady went out with the Baron," said Basque, "and has not returned yet." He sat down silently and waited an hour, but Cosette did not come in; he hung his head and went away. Cosette was so intoxicated by the walk in "their garden," and so pleased at having "lived a whole day in her past," that she spoke of nothing else the next day. She did not remark that she had not seen Jean Valjean.

"How did you go there?" Jean Valjean asked her.

"On foot."

"And how did you return?"

"On foot too."

For some time Jean Valjean had noticed the close life which the young couple led, and was annoyed at it. Marius' economy was strict, and that word had its absolute meaning with Jean Valjean; he hazarded a question.

"Why do you not keep a carriage? A little coupé would not cost you more than five hundred francs a month, and you are rich."

"I do not know," Cosette answered.

"It is the same with Toussaint," Jean Valjean continued; "she has left, and you have engaged no one in her place. Why not?"

"Nicolette is sufficient."

"But you must want a lady's maid?"

"Have I not Marius?"

"You ought to have a house of your own, servants of your own, a carriage, and a box at the opera. Nothing is too good for you. Then why not take advantage of the fact of your being rich? Wealth adds to happiness."

Cosette made no reply. Jean Valjean's visits did not grow shorter, on the contrary, for when it is the heart that is slipping, a man does not stop on the incline. When Jean Valjean wished to prolong his visit and make the hour be forgotten, he sung the praises of Marius, he found him handsome, noble, brave, witty, eloquent, and good. Cosette added to the praise, and Jean Valjean began again. It was an inexhaustible subject, and there were volumes in the six letters composing Marius' name. In this way Jean Valjean managed to stop for a long time, for it was so sweet to see Cosette and forget by her side. It was a dressing for his wound. It frequently happened that Basque would come and say twice,—"M. Gille-normand has sent me to remind Madame la Baronne that dinner is waiting." On those days Jean Valjean would return home very thoughtful. Was there any truth in that comparison

of the chrysalis which had occurred to Marius' mind? Was Jean Valjean really an obstinate chrysalis, constantly paying visits to his butterfly? One day he remained longer than usual, and the next noticed there was no fire in the grate. "Stay," he thought, "no fire?"—and he gave himself this explanation—"it is very simple; we are in April, and the cold weather has passed."

"Good gracious! how cold it is here!" Cosette exclaimed as she came in.

"Oh no," said Jean Valjean.

"Then it was you who told Basque not to light a fire?"

"Yes, we shall have May here directly."

"But fires keep on till June; in this cellar there ought to be one all the year round."

"I thought it was unnecessary."

"That is just like one of your ideas," Cosette remarked.

The next day there was a fire, but the two chairs were placed at the other end of the room, near the door. "What is the meaning of that?" Jean Valjean thought; he fetched the chairs and placed them in their usual place near the chimney. This rekindled fire, however, encouraged him, and he made the conversation last even longer than usual. As he rose to leave Cosette remarked to him,—

"My husband said a funny thing to me yesterday."

"What was it?"

"He said to me, 'Cosette, we have thirty thousand francs a year,—twenty-seven of yours, and three that my grandfather allows me.' I replied, 'That makes thirty;' and he continued, 'Would you have the courage to live on the three thousand?' I answered, 'Yes, on nothing, provided that it be with you;' and then I asked him, 'Why did you say that to me?' He replied, 'I merely wished to know.'"

Jean Valjean had not a word to say. Cosette probably expected some explanation from him, but he listened to her in a sullen silence. He went back to the Rue de l'Homme Armé, and was so profoundly abstracted that, instead of entering his own house, he went into the next one. It was not till he had gone up nearly two flights of stairs that he noticed his mistake, and came down again. His mind was crammed with conjectures: it was evident that Marius entertained doubts as to the origin of the six hundred thousand francs, that he feared some impure source; he might even, who knew? have discovered that this money came from him, Jean Valjean; that he hesitated to touch this suspicious fortune, and was repugnant to use it as his own, preferring that Cosette and he should remain poor

than be rich with dubious wealth. Moreover, Jean Valjean was beginning to feel himself shown to the door. On the following day he had a species of shock on entering the basement room ; the fanteuils had disappeared, and there was not even a seat of any sort.

" Dear me, no chairs," Cosette exclaimed on entering, " where are they ? "

" They are no longer here," Jean Valjean replied.

" That is rather too much."

Jean Valjean stammered,—

" I told Basque to remove them."

" For what reason ? "

" I shall only remain a few minutes to-day."

" Few or many, that is no reason for standing."

" I believe that Basque required the chairs for the drawing-room."

" Why ? "

" You have probably company this evening."

" Not a soul."

Jean Valjean had not another word to say, and Cosette shrugged her shoulders.

" Have the chairs removed ! The other day you ordered the fire to be left off ! How singular you are ! "

" Good-bye," Jean Valjean murmured.

He did not say " Good-bye, Cosette," but he had not the strength to say " Good-bye, Madame."

He went away, crushed, for this time he had comprehended. The next day he did not come, and Cosette did not remark this till the evening.

" Dear me," she said, " Monsieur Jean did not come to-day."

She felt a slight pang at the heart, but she scarce noticed it, as she was at once distracted by a kiss from Marius. The next day he did not come either. Cosette paid no attention to this, spent the evening, and slept at night as usual, and only thought of it when she woke ; she was so happy ! She very soon sent Nicolette to Monsieur Jean's to see whether he were ill, and why he had not come to see her on the previous day, and Nicolette brought back Monsieur Jean's answer. " He was not ill, but was busy, and would come soon, so soon as he could. But he was going to make a little journey, and Madame would remember that he was accustomed to do so every now and then. She need not feel at all alarmed or trouble herself about him." Nicolette, on entering Monsieur Jean's room, had repeated to him her mistress' exact words,—" That Madame sent to know 'why Monsieur Jean had not called on the previous day ?'"

"I have not called for two days," Jean Valjean said quietly, but the observation escaped Nicolette's notice, and she did not repeat it to Cosette.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

ATTRACTION AND EXTINCTION.

DURING the last months of spring and the early months of summer, 1833, the scanty passers-by in the Marais, the shopkeepers, and the idlers in the doorways, noticed an old gentleman, decently dressed in black, who every day, at nearly the same hour in the evening, left the Rue de l'Homme Armé, in the direction of the Rue Sainte Croix de la Bretonnerie, passed in front of the Blanes Manteaux, reached the Rue Culture Sainte Catharine, and on coming to the Rue de l'Echarpe, turned to his left and entered the Rue Saint Louis. There he walked slowly, with head stretched forward, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, with his eye incessantly fixed on a spot which always seemed his magnet, and which was nought else than the corner of the Rue des Filles du Calvaire. The nearer he came to this corner, the more brightly his eye flashed, a sort of joy illumined his eye-balls, like an internal dawn; he had a fascinated and affectionate air, his lips made obscure movements as if speaking to some one whom he could not see, he smiled vaguely, and he advanced as slowly as he could. It seemed as if, while wishing to arrive, he was afraid of the moment when he came quite close. When he had only a few houses between himself and the street which appeared to attract him, his step became so slow that at moments he seemed not to be moving at all. The vacillation of his head and the fixedness of his eye suggested the needle seeking the pole. Whatever time he might make his arrival last, he must arrive in the end; when he reached the corner of the Rue des Filles du Calvaire, he trembled, thrust his head with a species of gloomy timidity beyond the corner of the last house, and looked into this street, and there was in this glance something that resembled the bedazzlement of the impossible and the reflection of a closed paradise. Then a tear, which had been gradually collecting in the corner of his eyelashes, having grown large enough to fall, glided down his cheeks, and sometimes stopped at his mouth. The old man tasted its bitter

flavour. He stood thus for some minutes as if he were of stone ; then returned by the same road, at the same pace, and the further he got away the more lustreless his eye became.

By degrees this old man ceased going as far as the corner of the Rue des Filles du Calvaire, he stopped half way in the Rue St Louis ; at times a little further off, at times a little nearer. One day he stopped at the corner of the Rue Culture Sainte Catharine and gazed at the Rue des Filles du Calvaire from a distance ; then he silently shook his head from right to left, as if refusing himself something, and turned back. Ere long he did not reach even the Rue St Louis ; he arrived at the Rue Pavie, shook his head, and turned back ; then he did not go beyond the Rue des Trois Pavillons ; and then he did not pass the Blancs Manteaux. He seemed like a clock which was not wound up, and whose oscillations grow shorter and shorter till they stop. Every day he left his house at the same hour, undertook the same walk, but did not finish it, and incessantly shortened it, though probably unconscious of the fact. His whole countenance expressed this sole idea, Of what good is it ? His eyes were lustreless, and there was no radiance in them. The tears were also dried up ; they no longer collected in the corner of his eyelashes, and this pensive eye was dry. The old man's head was still thrust forward ; the chin moved at times, and the creases in his thin neck were painful to look on. At times, when the weather was bad, he had an umbrella under his arm, which he never opened. The good women of the district said, "He is an innocent," and the children followed him with shouts of laughter.

CHAPTER LXXV.

PITY THE UNHAPPY, BUT BE INDULGENT TO THE HAPPY.

IT is a terrible thing to be happy ! How satisfied people are ! how sufficient they find it ! how, when possessed of the false object of life, happiness, they forget the true one, duty ! We are bound to say, however, that it would be unjust to accuse Marius. Marius, as we have explained, before his marriage asked no questions of M. Fauchelevent, and since had been afraid to ask any of Jean Valjean. He had regretted the promise which he had allowed to be drawn from him, and had re-

peatedly said to himself that he had done wrong in making this concession to despair. He had restricted himself to gradually turning Jean Valjean out of his house, and effacing him as far as possible in Cosette's mind. He had to some extent constantly stationed himself between Cosette and Jean Valjean, feeling certain that in this way she would not perceive it, or think of it. It was more than an effacement, it was an eclipse. Marius did what he considered necessary and just; he believed that he had serious reasons, some of which we have seen, and some we have yet to see, for getting rid of Jean Valjean, without harshness, but without weakness. Chance having made him acquainted, in a trial in which he was retained, with an ex-clerk of Laffitte's bank, he had obtained, without seeking it, mysterious information, which, in truth, he had not been able to examine, through respect for the secret he had promised to keep, and through regard for Jean Valjean's perilous situation. He believed, at this very moment, that he had a serious duty to perform, the restitution of the six hundred thousand francs to some one whom he was seeking as discreetly as he could. In the mean while, he abstained from touching that money.

As for Cosette, she was not acquainted with any of these secrets; but it would be harsh to condemn her either. Between Marius and her was an omnipotent magnetism, which made her do instinctively and almost mechanically whatever Marius wished. She felt a wish of Marius in the matter of Monsieur Jean, and she conformed to it. Her husband had said nothing to her, but she underwent the vague but clear presence of his tacit intentions, and blindly obeyed. Her obedience in this case consisted in not remembering what Marius forgot; and she had no effort to make in doing so. Without her knowing why, her mind had so thoroughly become that of her husband, that whatever covered itself with a shadow in Marius' thoughts was obscured in hers. Let us not go too far, however; as regards Jean Valjean, this effacement and this forgetfulness were only superficial; and she was thoughtless rather than forgetful. In her heart she truly loved the man whom she had so long called father, but she loved her husband more, and this had slightly falsified the balance of this heart, which weighed down on one side only. It happened at times that Cosette would speak of Jean Valjean and express her surprise, and then Marius would calm her. "He is away, I believe; did he not say that he was going on a journey?"—"That is true," Cosette thought, "he used to disappear like that, but not for so long a time." Twice or thrice she sent Nicolette to inquire in the Rue de l'Homme Armé whether Monsieur Jean had returned from his tour, and

Jean Valjean sent answer in the negative. Cosette asked no more, as she had on earth but one want, Marius. Let us also say that Marius and Cosette had been absent too. They went to Vernon, and Marius took Cosette to his father's tomb. Marius had gradually abstracted Cosette from Jean Valjean, and Cosette had allowed it. However, what is called much too harshly in certain cases the ingratitude of children is not always so reprehensible a thing as may be believed. It is the ingratitude of nature, for nature, as we have said elsewhere, "looks before her," and divides living beings into arrivals and departures. The departures are turned to the darkness, and the arrivals toward light. Hence a divergence, which on the part of the old is fatal, on the part of the young is involuntary, and this divergence, at first insensible, increases slowly, like every separation of branches, and the twigs separate without detaching themselves from the parent stem. It is not their fault, for youth goes where there is joy, to festivals, to bright light, and to love, while old age proceeds toward the end. They do not lose each other out of sight, but there is no longer a connecting link : the young people feel the chill of life, and the old that of the tomb. Let us not accuse these poor children.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

A PEN IS TOO HEAVY FOR THE MAN WHO SAVED FAUCHELEVENT.

ONE day Jean Valjean went down his staircase, took three steps in the street, sat down upon a post, the same one on which Gavroche had found him sitting in thought on the night of June 5th ; he stayed there a few minutes, and then went up again. This was the last oscillation of the pendulum ; the next day he did not leave his room ; the next to that he did not leave his bed. The porter's wife, who prepared his poor meals for him, some cabbage or a few potatoes and a little bacon, looked at the brown earthenware plate and exclaimed,—

" Why, poor dear man, you ate nothing yesterday."

" Yes I did," Jean Valjean answered.

" The plate is quite full."

" Look at the water jug : it is empty."

"That proves you have drunk, but does not prove that you have eaten."

"Well," said Jean Valjean, "suppose that I only felt hungry for water?"

"That is called thirst, and if a man does not eat at the same time it is called fever."

"I will eat to-morrow."

"Or on Trinity Sunday. Why not to-day? whoever thought of saying, I will eat to-morrow? To leave my plate without touching it; my rashers were so good."

Jean Valjean took the old woman's hand.

"I promise you to eat them," he said, in his gentle voice.

"I am not pleased with you," the woman replied.

Jean Valjean never saw any other human creature but this good woman: there are in Paris streets through which people never pass, and houses which people never enter, and he lived in one of those streets and one of those houses. During the time when he still went out he had bought at a brazier's for a few sous a small copper crucifix, which he suspended from a nail opposite his bed; that gibbet is ever good to look on. A week passed thus, and Jean Valjean still remained in bed. The porter's wife said to her husband, "The old gentleman upstairs does not get up, he does not eat, and he will not last long. He has a sorrow, and no one will get it out of my head but that his daughter has made a bad match."

The porter replied, with the accent of marital sovereignty,—

"If he is rich, he can have a doctor; if he is not rich, he can't. If he has no doctor, he will die."

"And if he has one?"

"He will die," said the porter.

The porter's wife began digging up with an old knife the grass between what she called her pavement, and while doing so grumbled,—

"It's a pity. An old man who is so clean. He is as white as a pullet."

She saw a doctor belonging to the quarter passing along the bottom of the street, and took upon herself to ask him to go up.

"It's on the second floor," she said; "you will only have to go in, for, as the old gentleman no longer leaves his bed, the key is always in the door."

The physician saw Jean Valjean and spoke to him: when he came down again the porter's wife was waiting for him.

"Well, doctor?"

"He is very ill."

"What is the matter with him?"

"Everything and nothing. He is a man who, from all appearances, has lost a beloved person. People die of that."

"What did he say to you?"

"He told me that he was quite well."

"Will you call again, doctor?"

"Yes," the physician replied, "but some one beside me ought to come too."

One evening Jean Valjean had a difficulty in rising on his elbow; he took hold of his wrist and could not find his pulse; his breathing was short, and stopped every now and then, and he perceived that he was weaker than he had ever yet been. Then, doubtless under the pressure of some supreme preoccupation, he made an effort, sat up, and dressed himself. He put on his old workman's clothes; for, as he no longer went out, he had returned to them and preferred them. He was compelled to pause several times while dressing himself; and the perspiration poured off his forehead, merely through the effort of putting on his jacket. Ever since he had been alone he had placed his bed in the anteroom, so as to occupy as little as possible of the deserted apartments. He opened the valise, and took out Cosette's clothing, which he spread on his bed. The bishop's candlesticks were at their place on the mantelpiece; he took two wax candles out of a drawer and put them up, and then, though it was broad summer daylight, he lit them. We sometimes see candles lighted thus in open day in rooms where dead men are lying. Each step he took in going from one article of furniture to another exhausted him, and he was obliged to sit down. It was not ordinary fatigue, which expends the strength in order to renew it; it was the remnant of possible motion; it was exhausted life falling drop by drop in crushing efforts which will not be made again.

One of the chairs on which he sank was placed near the mirror, so fatal for him, so providential for Marius, in which he had read Cosette's reversed writing on the blotting-book. He saw himself in this mirror, and could not recognize himself. He was eighty years of age; before Marius' marriage he had looked scarce fifty, but the last year had reckoned as thirty. What he had on his forehead was no longer the wrinkle of age, but the mysterious mark of death, and the laceration of the pitiless nail could be traced on it. His cheeks were flaccid, the skin of his face had that colour which leads to the belief that there is already earth upon it; the two corners of his mouth drooped as in that mask which the ancients sculptured on the tomb: he looked at space reproachfully, and he resembled one of those

tragic beings who have cause to complain of some one. He had reached that stage, the last phase of dejection, in which grief no longer flows, it is, so to speak, coagulated, and there is on the soul something like a clot of despair. Night had set in, and he with difficulty dragged a table and the old easy chair to the chimney, and laid on the table pen, ink, and paper. This done he fainted away, and when he regained his senses he was thirsty ; as he could not lift the water-jar, he bent down with an effort and drank a mouthful. Then he turned to the bed, and, still seated, for he was unable to stand, he gazed at the little black dress and all those dear objects. Such contemplations last hours which appear minutes. All at once he shuddered, and felt that the cold had struck him. He leant his elbows on the table which the bishop's candlesticks illumined, and took up the pen. As neither the pen nor the ink had been used for a long time the nibs of the pen were bent, the ink was dried up, and he was therefore obliged to put a few drops of water in the ink, which he could not do without stopping and sitting down twice or thrice, and was forced to write with the back of the pen. He wiped his forehead from time to time, and his hand trembled as he wrote the few following lines.

"Cosette, I bless you. I am about to explain to you. Your husband did right in making me understand that I ought to go away ; still, he was slightly in error as to what he believed, but he acted rightly. He is a worthy man, and love him dearly when I am gone from you. Monsieur Pontmercy, always love my beloved child. Cosette, this paper will be found, this is what I wish to say to you ; you shall see the figures if I have the strength to remember them, but listen to me, the money is really yours. This is the whole affair ; white jet comes from Norway, black jet comes from England, and black beads come from Germany. Jet is lighter, more valuable, and dearer, but imitations can be made in France as well as in Germany. You must have a small anvil two inches square, and a spirit lamp to soften the wax. The wax used to be made with resin and smoke-black, and costs four francs the pound, but I hit on the idea of making it of shell-lac and turpentine. It only costs thirty sous, and is much better. The rings are made of violet glass fastened by means of the wax on a small black iron wire. The glass must be violet for iron ornaments, and black for gilt ornaments. Spain buys large quantities, it is the country of jet—"

Here he stopped, the pen slipped from his fingers, he burst into one of those despairing sobs which rose at times from the

depths of his being ; the poor man took his head between his hands and thought.

" Oh ! " he exclaimed internally (lamentable cries heard by God alone), " it is all over. I shall never see her again ; it is a smile which flashed across me, and I am going to enter night without even seeing her ; oh ! for one moment, for one instant to hear her voice, to touch her, to look at her, her, the angel, and then die ; death is nothing, but the frightful thing is to die without seeing her. She would smile on me, say a word to me, and would that do any one harm ? No, it is all over, for ever. I am all alone, my God ! my God ! I shall see her no more."

At this moment there was a knock at his door.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

A BOTTLE OF INK WHICH ONLY WHITENS.

THAT same day, or to speak more correctly, that same evening, as Marius was leaving the dinner-table to withdraw to his study, as he had a brief to get up, Basque handed him a letter, saying, " The person who wrote the letter is in the anteroom." Cosette had seized her grandfather's arm, and was taking a turn round the garden. A letter may have an ugly appearance, like a man, and the mere sight of coarse paper and clumsy folding is displeasing. The letter which Basque brought was of that description. Marius took it, and it smelt of tobacco. Nothing arouses a recollection so much as a smell, and Marius recognized the tobacco. He looked at the address, *To Monsieur le Baron Pommerci, At his house.* The recognized tobacco made him recognize the hand-writing. It might be said that astonishment has its flashes of lightning, and Marius was, as it were, illumined by one of these flashes. The odour, that mysterious aid to memory, had recalled to him a world : it was really the paper, the mode of folding, the pale ink, it was really the well-known hand-writing, and, above all, it was the tobacco. The Jondrette garret rose again before him. Hence—strange blow of accident !—one of the two trails which he had so long sought, the one for which he had latterly made so many efforts and believed lost for ever, came to offer itself voluntarily to him. He eagerly opened the letter and read :—

"Monsieur le Baron,

"If the Supreme Being had endowed me with talents, I might have been Baron Thénard, member of the Institute (academy of cienses), but I am not so, I merely bear the same name with him, and shall be happy if this reminiscence recommends me to the excellense of your kindness. The benefits with which you may honor me will be reciprocal, for I am in possession of a secret conserning an individual. This individual conserns you. I hold the secret at your disposal, as I desire to have the honor of being huseful to you. I will give you the simple means for expeling from your honorable family this individual who has no right in it, Madam la Barronne being of high birth. The sanctuary of virtue could no longer coabit with crime without abdicating.

"I await in the anteroom the order of Monsieur le Baron.

"Respectfully."

The letter was signed "THENARD." This signature was not false, but only slightly abridged. However, the bombast and the orthography completed the revelation, the certificate of origin was perfect, and no doubt was possible. Marius' emotion was profound; and after the movement of surprise he had a movement of happiness. Let him now find the other man he sought, the man who had saved him, Marius, and he would have nothing more to desire. He opened a drawer in his bureau, took out several bank-notes, which he put in his pocket, closed the bureau again, and rang. Basque opened the door partly.

"Show the man in," said Marius.

Basque announced,—

"M. Thénard."

A man came in, and it was a fresh surprise for Marius, as the man he now saw was a perfect stranger to him. This man, who was old, by the way, had a large nose, his chin in his cravat, green spectacles, with a double shade of green silk over his eyes, and his hair smoothed down and flattened on his forehead over his eyebrows, like the wig of English coachmen of high life. His hair was grey. He was dressed in black from head to foot, a very seedy but clean black, and a bunch of seals, emerging from his fob, led to the supposition that he had a watch. He held an old hat in his hand, and walked bent, and the curve in his back augmented the depth of his bow. The thing which struck most at the first glance was that this person's coat, too large, though carefully buttoned,

had not been made for him. A short digression is necessary here.

There was at that period in Paris, in an old house situated in the Rue Beaufreillis near the arsenal, an old Jew whose trade it was to convert a rogue into an honest man, though not for too long a period, as it might have been troublesome to the rogue. The change was effected at sight, for one day or two, at the rate of thirty sous a day, by means of a costume resembling closely as possible every-day honesty. This letter-out of suits was called the *Changer*. Parisian thieves had given him that name, and knew him by no other. He had a very complete wardrobe, and the clothes in which he invested people were almost possible. He had specialities and categories : from each nail of his store hung a social condition, worn and thread-bare ; here the magistrate's coat, there the curé's coat, and the banker's coat ; in one corner the coat of an officer on half pay, elsewhere the coat of a man of letters, and further on the statesman's coat. This creature was the costumier of the immense drama which roguery plays in Paris, and his den was the side-scene from which robbery made its entrance, or swindling its exit. A ragged rogue arrived at this wardrobe, deposited thirty sous, and selected, according to the part which he wished to play on that day, the clothes which suited him ; and, on going down the stairs again, the rogue was somebody. The next day the clothes were faithfully brought back, and the changer, who entirely trusted to the thieves, was never robbed. These garments had one inconvenience,—they did not fit ; not being made for the man who wore them, they were tight on one, loose on another, and fitted nobody. Any swindler who exceeded the average mean in height or shortness, was uncomfortable in the changer's suits. A man must be neither too stout nor too thin, for the changer had only provided for ordinary mortals, and had taken the measure of the species in the person of the first thief who turned up, and is neither stout nor thin, nor tall nor short. Hence arose at times difficult adaptations, which the changer's customers got over as best they could. All the worse for the exceptions ! The statesman's garments for instance, black from head to foot, would have been too loose for Pitt and too tight for Castelcicala. The statesman's suit was thus described in the changer's catalogue, from which we copied it : "A black cloth coat, black moleskin trowsers, a silk waistcoat, boots, and white shirt." There was on the margin *Ex-Ambassador*, and a note which we also transcribe : "In a separate box a carefully-dressed peruke, green

spectacles, bunch of seals, and two little quills an inch in length, wrapped in cotton." All this belonged to the statesman or ex-ambassador. The whole of this costume was, if we may say so, extenuated. The seams were white, and a small button-hole gaped at one of the elbows; moreover, a button was missing off the front, but that is only a detail, for as the hand of the statesman must always be thrust into the coat, and upon the heart, it had the duty of hiding the absence of the button.

Had Marius been familiar with the occult institutions of Paris, he would at once have recognized in the back of the visitor whom Basque had just shown in, the coat of the statesman borrowed from the Unhook-me-that of the changer. Marius' disappointment, on seeing a different man from the one whom he expected enter, turned into disgust with the new comer. He examined him from head to foot, while the personage was giving him an exaggerated bow, and asked him curtly, "What do you want?"

The man replied with an amiable *rictus*, of which the caressing smile of a crocodile would supply some idea:—

"It appears to me impossible that I have not already had the honour of seeing Monsieur le Baron in society. I have a peculiar impression of having met you, my lord, a few years back, at the Princess Bagration's, and in the salons of his Excellency Vicomte Dambray, Peer of France."

It is always good tactics in swindling to pretend to recognize a person whom the swindler does not know. Marius paid attention to the man's words, he watched the action and movement, but his disappointment increased; it was a nasal pronunciation, absolutely different from the sharp dry voice he expected. He was utterly routed.

"I do not know," he said, "either Madame Bagration or Monsieur Dambray. I never set foot in the house of either of them."

The answer was rough, but the personage continued with undiminished affability,—

"Then, it must have been at Chateaubriand's, my lord, that I saw you! I know Chateaubriand intimately, and he is a most affable man. He says to me sometimes, Thénard, my good friend, will you not drink a glass with me?"

Marius' brow became sterner and sterner. "I never had the honour of being introduced to M. de Chateaubriand. Come to the point, what do you want with me?"

The man bowed lower still before this harsh voice.

"Monsieur le Baron, deign to listen to me. There is in America, in a country near Panama, a village called La Joya,

and this village is composed of a single house. A large square house three storeys high, built of bricks dried in the sun, each side of the square being five hundred feet long, and each storey retiring from the one under it for a distance of twelve feet; so as to leave in front of it a terrace which runs all round the house. In the centre is an inner court, in which provisions and ammunition are stored; there are no windows, only loop-holes, no door, only ladders—ladders to mount from the ground to the first terrace, and from the first to the second, and from the second to the third, ladders to descend into the inner court; no doors to the rooms, only traps; no staircases to the apartments, only ladders. At night the trap-doors are closed, the ladders are drawn up, and blunderbusses and carbines are placed in the loop-holes; there is no way of entering; it is a house by day, a citadel by night. Eight hundred inhabitants, such is this village. Why such precautions? Because the country is dangerous, and full of anthropophagists. Then, why do people go there? Because it is a marvellous country, and gold is found there."

"What are you driving at?" Marius, who had passed from disappointment to impatience, interrupted.

"To this, M. le Baron. I am an ex-worn-out diplomatist. I am sick of our old civilization, and wish to try the savages."

"What next?"

"Monsieur le Baron, egotism is the law of the world. The proletarian peasant-wench who works by the day turns round when the diligence passes, but the peasant woman who is labouring on her own field does not turn. The poor man's dog barks after the rich, the rich man's dog barks after the poor; each for himself, and self-interest is the object of mankind. Gold is the magnet."

"What next? conclude."

"I should like to go and settle at La Joya. There are three of us. I have my wife and my daughter, a very lovely girl. The voyage is long and expensive, and I am short of funds."

"How does that concern me?" Marius asked.

The stranger thrust his neck out of his cravat, with a gesture peculiar to the vulture, and said, with a more affable smile than before,—

"Monsieur le Baron cannot have read my letter?"

That was almost true, and the fact is that the contents of the epistle had escaped Marius; he had seen the writing rather than read the letter, and he scarce remembered it. A new hint had just been given him, and he noticed the detail, "My wife and daughter." He fixed a penetrating glance on the stranger,

a magistrate could not have done it better, but he confined himself to saying,—

“Be more precise.”

The stranger thrust his hands in his trousers’ pockets, raised his head without straightening his back-bone, but on his side scrutinizing Marius through his green spectacles.

“Very good, M. le Baron. I will be precise. I have a secret to sell you.”

“Does it concern me ? ”

“Slightly.”

“What is it ? ”

Marius more and more examined the man while listening.

“I will begin gratis,” the stranger said ; “you will soon see that it is interesting.”

“Speak.”

“Monsieur le Baron, you have in your house a robber and assassin.”

Marius gave a start.

“In my house ? no,” he said.

The stranger imperturbably brushed his hat with his arm, and went on.

“An assassin and robber. Remark, M. le Baron, that I am not speaking here of old-forgotten facts, which might be effaced by prescription before the law—by repentance before God. I am speaking of recent facts, present facts, of facts still unknown to justice. I continue. This man has crept into your confidence, and almost into your family, under a false name. I am going to tell you his real name, and tell it you for nothing.”

“I am listening.”

“His name is Jean Valjean.”

“I know it.”

“I will tell, equally for nothing, who he is.”

“Speak.”

“He is an ex-convict.”

“I know it.”

“You have known it since I had the honour of telling you.”

“No, I was aware of it before.”

Marius’ cold tone, this double reply, *I know it*, and his refractory disinclination to speak, aroused some latent anger in the stranger, and he gave Marius a furious side-glance, which was immediately extinguished. Rapid though it was, the glance was one of those which are recognized if they have once been seen, and it did not escape Marius. Certain flashes can only come from certain souls; the eyeball, that cellar-door of the

soul, is lit up by them, and green spectacles conceal nothing ; you might as well put up a glass window to hell. The stranger continued, smiling,—

“ I will not venture to contradict M. le Baron, but in any case you will see that I am well informed. Now, what I have to tell you is known to myself alone, and it affects the fortune of Madame la Baronne. It is an extraordinary secret, and is for sale. I offer it you first. Cheap, twenty thousand francs.”

“ I know that secret as I know the other,” said Marius.

The personage felt the necessity of lowering his price a little.

“ Monsieur le Baron, let us say ten thousand francs, and I will speak.”

“ I repeat to you that you have nothing to tell me. I know what you want to say to me.”

There was a fresh flash in the man’s eye, as he continued,—

“ Still I must dine to-day. It is an extraordinary secret, I tell you. Monsieur, I am going to speak. I am speaking. Give me twenty francs.”

Marius looked at him fixedly.

“ I know your extraordinary secret, just as I knew Jean Valjean’s name, and as I know yours.”

“ My name ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ That is not difficult, M. le Baron, for I had the honour of writing it and mentioning it to you. Thénard— ”

“ —dier.”

“ What ? ”

“ Thénardier.”

“ What does this mean ? ”

In danger the porcupine bristles, the beetle feigns death, the old guard forms a square : this man began laughing. Then he flipped a grain of dust off his coat sleeve. Marius continued,—

“ You are also the workman Jondrette, the actor Fabantou, the poet Genflot, the Spanish Don Alvares, and Madame Balaizard.”

“ Madame who ? ”

“ And you once kept a pot-house at Montfermeil.”

“ A pot-house ! never.”

“ And I tell you that you are Thénardier.”

“ I deny it.”

“ And that you are a scoundrel. Take that.”

And Marius, taking a bank-note from his pocket, threw it in his face.

"Five hundred francs! Monsieur le Baron!"

And the man, overwhelmed and bowing, clutched the note and examined it.

"Five hundred francs," he continued, quite dazzled.

And he stammered half aloud, "No counterfeit."

Then suddenly exclaimed,—

"Well, be it so; let us be at our ease."

And with monkey-like dexterity, throwing back his hair, tearing off his spectacles, and removing the two quills to which we alluded just now, and which we have seen before in another part of this book, he took off his face as you or I take off our hat. His eye grew bright, the forehead, hideously wrinkled at top, became smooth, the nose sharp as a beak, and the ferocious and sagacious profile of the predacious man reappeared.

"Monsieur le Baron is infallible," he said in a sharp voice, from which the nasal twang had entirely disappeared; "I am Thénardier."

And he drew up his curved back.

Thénardier, for it was really he, was strangely surprised, and would have been troubled could he have been so. He had come to bring astonishment, and it was himself who underwent it. This humiliation was paid for with five hundred francs, and he accepted it; but he was not the less stunned. He saw for the first time this Baron Pontmercy, and in spite of his disguise this Baron Pontmercy recognized him, and recognized him thoroughly; and not alone was this Baron acquainted with Thénardier, but he also seemed acquainted with Jean Valjean. Who was this almost beardless young man, so cold and so generous; who knew people's names, knew all their names, and opened his purse to them; who bullied rogues like a judge, and paid them like a dupe? Thénardier, it well be remembered, though he had been Marius' neighbour, had never seen him, which is frequently the case in Paris; he had formerly vaguely heard his daughter speak of a very poor young man of the name of Marius, who lived in the house, and he had written him, without knowing him, the letter we formerly read. No approximation between this Marius and M. le Baron Pontmercy was possible in his mind.

However, he had managed through his daughter Azelma, whom he put on the track of the married couple on February 16th, and by his own researches, to learn a good many things, and in his dark den had succeeded in seizing more than one mysterious thread. He had by sheer industry discovered, or at least by the inductive process had divined, who the man was whom he had met on a certain day in the great sewer. From

the man he had easily arrived at the name, and he knew that Madame la Baronne Pontmercy was Cosette. But on that point he intended to be discreet; who Cosette was he did not know exactly himself. He certainly got a glimpse of some bastardism, and Fantine's story had always appeared to him doubtful. But what was the good of speaking? to have his silence paid? He had, or fancied he had, something better to sell than that, and according to all expectation, to go and make Baron Pontmercy without further proof the revelation, *Your wife is only a bastard*, would only have succeeded in attracting the husband's boot to the broadest part of his person.

In Thénardier's thoughts the conversation with Marius had not yet begun; he had been obliged to fall back, modify his strategy, leave a position, and make a change of front; but nothing essential was as yet compromised, and he had five hundred francs in his pocket. Moreover, he had something decisive to tell, and he felt himself strong even against this Baron Pontmercy, who was so well-informed and so well-armed. For men of Thénardier's nature every dialogue is a combat, and what was his situation in the one which was about to begin? He did not know to whom he was speaking, but he knew of what he was speaking. He rapidly made this mental review of his forces, and after saying, *I am Thénardier*, waited. Marius was in deep thought; he at length held Thénardier, and the man whom he had so eagerly desired to find again was before him. He would be able at last to honour Colonel Pontmercy's recommendation. It humiliated him that this hero owed anything to this bandit, and that the bill of exchange drawn by his father from the tomb upon him, Marius, had remained up to this day protested. It seemed to him, too, in the complex state of his mind as regarded Thénardier, that he was bound to avenge the Colonel for the misfortune of having been saved by such a villain. But, however this might be, he was satisfied; he was at length going to free the Colonel's shadow from this unworthy creditor, and felt as if he were releasing his father's memory from a debtor's prison. By the side of this duty he had another, clearing up if possible the source of Cosette's fortune. The opportunity appeared to present itself, for Thénardier probably knew something, and it might be useful to see to the bottom of this man; so he began with that. Thénardier put away the "no counterfeit" carefully in his pocket, and looked at Marius with almost tender gentleness. Marius was the first to break the silence.

"Thénardier, I have told you your name, and now do you wish me to tell you the secret which you have come to impart

to me? I have my information also, and you shall see that I know more than you do. Jean Valjean, as you said, is an assassin and a robber. A robber, because he plundered a rich manufacturer, M. Madeleine, whose ruin he caused: an assassin, because he murdered Inspector Javert."

"I do not understand you, M. le Baron," said Thénardier.

"I will make you understand; listen. There was in a bailiwick of the Pas de Calais, about the year 1822, a man who had been in some trouble with the authorities, and who had rehabilitated and restored himself under the name of Monsieur Madeleine. This man had become, in the fullest extent of the term, a just man, and he made the fortune of an entire town by a trade, the manufacture of black beads. As for his private fortune, he had made that too, but secondarily, and to some extent as occasion offered. He was the foster-father of the poor, he founded hospitals, opened schools, visited the sick, dowered girls, supported widows, adopted orphans, and was, as it were, guardian of the town. He had refused the cross, and was appointed mayor. A liberated convict knew the secret of a penalty formerly incurred by this man; he denounced and had him arrested, and took advantage of the arrest to come to Paris and draw out of Laffitte's, I have the facts from the cashier himself, by means of a false signature, a sum of half a million and more, which belonged to M. Madeleine. The convict who robbed M. Madeleine was Jean Valjean; as for the other fact, you can tell me no more than I know either. Jean Valjean killed Inspector Javert with a pistol-shot, and I, who am speaking to you, was present."

Thénardier gave Marius the sovereign glance of a beaten man who sets his hand again on the victory, and has regained in a minute all the ground he had lost. But the smile at once returned, for the inferior, when in presence of his superior, must keep his triumph to himself, and Thénardier confined himself to saying to Marius,—

"Monsieur le Baron, we are on the wrong track."

And he underlined this sentence by giving his bunch of seals an expressive twirl.

"What!" Marius replied, "do you dispute it? They are facts."

"They are chimeras. The confidence with which Monsieur le Baron honours me makes it my duty to tell him so. Before all, truth and justice, and I do not like to see people accused wrongfully. Monsieur le Baron, Jean Valjean did not rob M. Madeleine, and Jean Valjean did not kill Javert."

"That is rather strong. Why not?"

“For two reasons.”

“What are they? speak.”

“The first is this: he did not rob M. Madeleine, because Jean Valjean himself is M. Madeleine.”

“What nonsense are you talking?”

“And this is the second: he did not assassinate Javert because the man who killed Javert was Javert.”

“What do you mean?”

“That Javert committed suicide.”

“Prove it, prove it,” Marius cried wildly.

Thénardier repeated slowly, scanning his sentence after the fashion of an ancient Alexandrian,—

“Police-Agent-Javert-was-found-drowned-un-der-a-boat-at-Pont-au-Change.”

“But prove it, then.”

Thénardier drew from his side-pocket a large grey paper parcel, which seemed to contain folded papers of various sizes.

“I have my proofs,” he said calmly, and he added,—

“Monsieur le Baron, I wished to know Jean Valjean thoroughly on your behalf. I say that Jean Valjean and Madeleine are the same, and I say that Javert had no other assassin but Javert, and when I say this, I have the proofs, not MS. proofs, for writing is suspicious and complaisant, but printed proofs.”

While speaking, Thénardier extracted from the parcel two newspapers, yellow, faded, and tremendously saturated with tobacco. One of these two papers, broken in all the folds, and falling in square rags, seemed much older than the other.

“Two facts, two proofs,” said Thénardier, as he handed Marius the two open newspapers.

These two papers the reader knows; one, the older, a number of the *Drapeau Blanc*, for January 25th, 1823, of which the exact text was given at p. 300 of vol. i. established the identity of M. Madeleine and Jean Valjean. The other, a *Moniteur*, of June 15th, 1832, announced the suicide of Javert, adding that it was found from a verbal report made by Javert to the Préfet, that he had been made prisoner at the barricade of the Rue de la Chanvrerie, and owed his life to the magnanimity of an insurgent, who, when holding him under his pistol, instead of blowing out his brains, fired in the air. Marius read; there was evidence, a certain date, irrefragable proof, for these two papers had not been printed expressly to support Thénardier’s statement, and the note published in the *Moniteur* was officially communicated by the Prefecture of Police. Marius could no longer doubt, the cashier’s information was false, and he was

himself mistaken. Jean Valjean, suddenly growing taller, issued from the cloud, and Marius could not restrain a cry of joy.

"What, then, this poor fellow is an admirable man! all this fortune is really his! He is Madeleine, the providence of an entire town! he is Jean Valjean, the saviour of Javert! he is a hero! he is a saint!"

"He is not a saint, and he is not a hero," said Thénardier, "he is an assassin and a robber."

And he added with the accent of a man beginning to feel himself possessed of some authority, "Let us calm ourselves." Robber, assassin, those words which Marius believed had disappeared, and which had returned, fell upon him like an icy douche.

"Still," he said—

"Still," said Thénardier, "Jean Valjean did not rob M. Madeleine, but he is a robber; he did not assassinate Javert, but he is an assassin."

"Are you alluding," Marius continued, "to that wretched theft committed forty years back, and expiated, as is proved from those very papers, by a whole life of repentance, self-denial, and virtue?"

"I say assassination and robbery, M. le Baron, and repeat that I am alluding to recent facts. What I have to reveal to you is perfectly unknown and unpublished, and you may perhaps find in it the source of the fortune cleverly offered by Jean Valjean to Madame la Baronne. I say skilfully, for it would not be a stupid act, by a donation of that nature, to step into an honourable house, whose comforts he would share, and at the same time hide the crime, enjoy his robbery, bury his name, and create a family."

"I could interrupt you here," Marius observed, "but go on."

"Monsieur le Baron, I will tell you all, leaving the reward to your generosity, for the secret is worth its weight in gold. You will say to me, 'Why not apply to Jean Valjean?' For a very simple reason. I know that he has given up all his property in your favour, and I consider the combination ingenious; but he has not a halfpenny left; he would show me his empty hands, and as I want money for my voyage to La Joya, I prefer you, who have everything, to him, who has nothing. As I am rather fatigued, permit me to take a chair."

Marius sat down, and made him a sign to do the same. Thénardier installed himself in an easy chair, took up the newspapers, put them back in the parcel, and muttered as he dug his nail into the *Drapeau Blanc*,—"It cost me a deal of trouble to procure this." This done, he crossed his legs, threw him-

self in the chair in the attitude of men who are certain of what they are stating, and then began his narrative gravely, and laying a stress on his words :—

“ Monsieur le Baron, on June 6th, 1832, about a year ago, and on the day of the riots, a man was in the great sewer of Paris, at the point where the sewer falls into the Seine between the Pont des Invalides and the Pont de Jena.”

Marius hurriedly drew his chair closer to Thénardier’s. Thénardier noticed this movement, and continued with the slowness of an orator who holds his hearer, and feels his adversary quivering under his words :—

“ This man, forced to hide himself, for reasons, however, unconnected with politics, had selected the sewer as his domicile, and had the key of it. It was, I repeat, June 6th, and about eight in the evening the man heard a noise in the sewer ; feeling greatly surprised, he concealed himself and watched. It was a sound of footsteps ; some one was walking in the darkness, and coming in his direction ; strange to say, there was another man beside himself in the sewer. As the outlet of the sewer was no great distance off, a little light which passed through enabled him to see the new-comer, and that he was carrying something on his back. He walked in a stooping posture ; he was an ex-convict, and what he had on his shoulders was a corpse. A flagrant case of assassination, were there ever one ; as for the robbery, that is a matter of course, for no one kills a man gratis. This convict was going to throw the body into the river, and a fact worth notice is, that, before reaching the outlet, the convict, who had come a long way through the sewer, was obliged to pass a frightful hole, in which it seems as if he might have left the corpse ; but the sewer-men who came to effect the repairs next day would have found the murdered man there, and that did not suit the assassin. Hence he preferred carrying the corpse across the slough, and his efforts must have been frightful ; it was impossible to risk one’s life more perfectly, and I do not understand how he got out of it alive.”

Marius’ chair came nearer, and Thénardier took advantage of it to draw a long breath ; then he continued :—

“ Monsieur le Baron, a sewer is not the Champ de Mars ; everything is wanting there, even space, and when two men are in it together they must meet. This happened, and the domiciled man and the passer-by were compelled to bid each other good evening, to their mutual regret. The passer-by said to the domiciled man, ‘ *You see what I have on my back. I must go out, you have the key, so give it to me.* ’ This convict was a man of terrible strength, and there was no chance of re-

fusing him ; still the man who held the key parleyed, solely to gain time. He examined the dead man, but could see nothing, except that he was young, well dressed, had a rich look, and was quite disfigured with blood. While talking, he managed to tear off, without the murderer perceiving it, a piece of the skirt of the victim's coat, as a convincing proof, you understand, a means of getting on the track of the affair, and bringing the crime home to the criminal. He placed the piece of cloth in his pocket ; after which he opened the grating, allowed the man with the load on his back to go out, locked the grating again, and ran away, not feeling at all desirous to be mixed up any further in the adventure, or to be present when the assassin threw the corpse into the river. You now understand ; the man who carried the corpse was Jean Valjean, the one who had the key is speaking to you at this moment, and the piece of coat-skirt.

Thénardier completed the sentence by drawing from his pocket and holding level with his eyes a ragged piece of black cloth, all covered with dark spots. Marius had risen, pale, scarce breathing, with his eye fixed on the black patch, and, without uttering a syllable, or without taking his eyes off the rag, he fell back, and, with his right hand extended behind him, felt for the key of a wall-cupboard near the mantel-piece. He found this key, opened the cupboard, and thrust his hand without looking or once taking his eyes off the rag which Thénardier displayed. In the mean while Thénardier continued,—

“ Monsieur le Baron, I have the strongest grounds for believing that the assassinated young man was a wealthy foreigner, drawn by Jean Valjean into a trap, and carrying an enormous sum about him.”

“ I was the young man, and here is the coat ! ” cried Marius, as he threw on the floor an old blood-stained surtout. Then, taking the patch from Thénardier's hands, he bent over the coat and put it in its place in the skirt ; the rent fitted exactly, and the fragment completed the coat. Thénardier was petrified, and thought, “ I'm sold.” Marius drew himself up, shuddering, desperate, and radiant ; he felt in his pocket, and walking furiously towards Thénardier, thrusting almost into his face his hand full of five hundred and thousand franc notes,—

“ You are an infamous wretch ! you are a liar, a calumniator, and a villain ! You came to accuse that man, and you have justified him ; you came to ruin him, and have only succeeded in glorifying him. And it is you who are the robber ! it is you who are an assassin ! I saw you, Thénardier Jondrette, at that den on the Boulevard de l'Hôpital. I know enough about you

to send you to the galleys, and even further if I liked. There are a thousand francs, ruffian that you are!"

And he threw a thousand-franc note at Thénardier.

"Ah, Jondrette—Thénardier, vile scoundrel, let this serve you as a lesson, you hawker of secrets, you dealer in mysteries, you searcher in the darkness, you villain, take these five hundred francs, and be off. Waterloo protects you."

"Waterloo!" Thénardier growled, as he pocketed the five hundred francs.

"Yes, assassin! you saved there the life of a colonel."

"A general!" Thénardier said, raising his head.

"A colonel," Marius repeated furiously, "I would not give a farthing for a general. And you come here to commit an infamy! I tell you that you have committed every crime! Begone! disappear! Be happy, that is all I desire! Ah, monster! here are three thousand francs more: take them. You will start to-morrow for America with your daughter, for your wife is dead, you abominable liar! I will watch over your departure, bandit, and at the moment when you set sail, pay you twenty thousand francs. Go and get hanged elsewhere."

"Monsieur le Baron," Thénardier answered, bowing to the ground, "accept my eternal gratitude."

And Thénardier left the room, understanding nothing of all this, but stupefied and ravished by this sweet crushing under bags of gold, and this lightning flashing over his head in the shape of bank-notes. Let us finish at once with this man: two days after the events we have just recorded he started for America, under a false name, with his daughter Azelma, and provided with an order on a New York banker, for twenty thousand francs. The moral misery of Thénardier, the spoiled bourgeois, was irremediable, and he was in America what he had been in Europe. The contact with a wicked man is sometimes sufficient to rot a good action, and to make something bad issue from it: with Marius' money Thénardier turned slave dealer.

So soon as Thénardier had departed, Marius ran into the garden where Cosette was still walking.

"Cosette, Cosette," he cried, "come, come quickly, let us be off. Basque, a hackney-coach. Cosette, come! oh heavens! it was he who saved my life! let us not lose a minute! Put on your shawl."

Cosette thought him mad, and obeyed. He could not breathe, and laid his hand on his heart to check its beating. He walked up and down with long strides, and embraced

Cosette. "O Cosette," he said, "I am a scoundrel." Marius was amazed, for he was beginning to catch a glimpse of some strange, lofty, and sombre figure in this Jean Valjean. An extraordinary virtue appeared to him, supreme and gentle, and humble in its immensity, and the convict was transfigured into Christ. Marius was dazzled by this prodigy, and though he knew not exactly what he saw, it was grand. In an instant the hackney-coach was at the gate. Marius helped Cosette in, and followed her.

"Driver," he cried, "No. 7, Rue de l'Homme Armé."

"Oh, how glad I am," said Cosette. "Rue de l'Homme Armé, I did not dare speak to you about Monsieur Jean, but we are going to see him."

"Your father, Cosette! your father more than ever. Cosette, I see it all. You told me that you never received the letter I sent you by Gavroche. It must have fallen into his hands, Cosette, and he came to the barricade to save me. As it is his sole duty to be an angel, in passing he saved others: he saved Javert. He drew me out of that gulf to give me to you; he carried me on his back through that frightful sewer. Ah! I am a monstrous ingrate! Cosette, after having been your providence, he was mine. Just imagine that there was a horrible pit, in which a man could be drowned a hundred times, drowned in mud, Cosette; and he carried me through it. I had fainted; I saw nothing, I heard nothing, I could not know anything about my own adventures. We are going to bring him back with us, and whether he is willing or not he shall never leave us again. I only hope he is at home! I only hope we shall find him! I will spend the rest of my life in revering him. Yes, it must have been so, Cosette, and Gavroche must have given him my letter. That explains everything. You understand."

Cosette did not understand a word.

"You are right," she said to him.

In the mean while the hackney-coach rolled along.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

A NIGHT BEHIND WHICH IS DAY.

AT the knock he heard at his door Jean Valjean turned round.

“ Come in,” he said feebly.

The door opened, and Cosette and Marius appeared. Cosette rushed into the room. Marius remained on the threshold, leaning against the door-post.

“ Cosette ! ” said Jean Valjean, and he sat up in his chair, with his arms outstretched and opened, haggard, livid, and sinister, but with an immense joy in his eyes. Cosette, suffocated with emotion, fell on Jean Valjean’s breast.

“ Father,” she said.

Jean Valjean, utterly overcome, stammered, “ Cosette ! she—you—Madame ! it is you ! oh, my God ! ”

And clasped in Cosette’s arms, he exclaimed,—

“ It is you ! you are here ; you forgive me, then ! ”

Marius, drooping his eyelids to keep his tears from flowing, advanced a step, and muttered between his lips, which were convulsively clenched to stop his sobs,—

“ Father ! ”

“ And you, too, you forgive me,” said Jean Valjean.

Marius could not find a word to say, and Jean Valjean added, “ Thank you.” Cosette took off her shawl, and threw her bonnet on the bed.

“ It is in my way,” she said.

And sitting down on the old man’s knees, she parted his grey hair with an adorable movement, and kissed his forehead. Jean Valjean, who was wandering, let her do so. Cosette, who only comprehended very vaguely, redoubled her caresses, as if she wished to pay Marius’ debt, and Jean Valjean stammered,—

“ How foolish a man can be ! I fancied that I should not see her again. Just imagine, Monsieur Pontmercy, that at the very moment when you came in I was saying, ‘ It is all over.’ There is her little dress. ‘ I am a wretched man, I shall not see Cosette again,’ I was saying at the very moment when you were coming up the stairs. What an idiot I was ! a man can be as idiotic as that ! But people count without le bon Dieu, who says,—‘ Men imagine that they are going to be abandoned ;

no ; things will not happen like that. Down below there is a poor old fellow who wants an angel.' And the angel comes, and he sees Cosette again, and he sees his little Cosette again. Oh ! I was very unhappy."

For a moment he was unable to speak, then he went on,—

"I really wanted to see Cosette for a little while every now and then, for a heart requires a bone to gnaw. Still, I felt perfectly that I was in the way. I said to myself, They do not want you, so stop in your corner ; a man has no right to pay everlasting visits. Ah ! blessed be God ! I see her again. Do you know, Cosette, that your husband is very handsome ? What a pretty embroidered collar you are wearing, I like that pattern ; your husband chose it, did he not ? And, then, you will need cashmere shawls. Monsieur Pontmercy, let me call her Cosette, it will not be for long."

And Cosette replied,—

"How unkind to have left us like that ! where have you been to ? why were you away so long ? Formerly, your absences did not last over three or four days. I sent Nicolette, and the answer always was, 'He has not returned.' When did you get back ? why did you not let us know ? are you aware that you are greatly changed ? Oh, naughty papa, he has been ill, and we did not know it. Here, Marius, feel how cold his hand is !"

"So you are here ! so you forgive me, Monsieur Pontmercy ?" Jean Valjean repeated.

At this remark, all that was swelling in Marius' heart found a vent, and he burst forth,—

"Do you hear, Cosette ? he asks my pardon. And do you know what he did for me, Cosette ? He saved my life, he did more, he gave you to me, and, after saving me, and after giving you to me, Cosette, what did he do for himself ? He sacrificed himself, that is the man. And to me, who am so ungrateful, so pitiless, so forgetful, and so guilty, he says, 'Thank you !' Cosette, my whole life spent at this man's feet would be too little. That barricade, that sewer, that furnace, that pit, he went through them all for me and for you, Cosette ! He carried me through every form of death, which he held at bay from me and accepted for himself. This man possesses every courage, every virtue, every heroism, and every holiness, and he is an angel, Cosette."

"Stop, stop !" Jean Valjean said in a whisper, "why talk in that way ?"

"But why did you not tell me of it ?" exclaimed Marius, with a passion in which was veneration, "it is your fault also. You save people's lives, and conceal the fact from them ! You do

more; under the pretext of unmasking yourself, you calumniate yourself. It is frightful."

"I told the truth," Jean Valjean replied.

"No," Marius retorted, "the truth is the whole truth, and you did not tell that. You were Monsieur Madeleine, why not tell me so? You saved Javert, why not tell me so? I owed you life, why not tell me so?"

"Because I thought like you, and found that you were right. It was necessary that I should leave you. Had you known of the sewer you would have compelled me to remain with you, and hence I held my tongue. Had I spoken, I should have been in the way."

"Been in the way of whom? of what?" Marius broke out, "Do you fancy that you are going to remain here? We mean to take you back with us. Oh! good heaven! when I think that I only learnt all this by accident! We shall take you away with us, for you form a part of ourselves; you are her father and mine. You shall not spend another day in this frightful house, so do not fancy you will be here to-morrow."

"To-morrow," said Jean Valjean, "I shall be no longer here, but I shall not be at your house."

"What do you mean?" Marius asked. "Oh! no, we shall not let you travel any more; you shall not leave us again, for you belong to us, and we will not let you go."

"This time it is for good," Cosette added, "we have a carriage below, and I mean to carry you off; if necessary, I shall employ force."

And, laughing, she feigned to raise the old man in her arms.

"Your room is still all ready in our house," she went on. "If you only knew how pretty the garden is just at present! the azaleas are getting on splendidly; the walks are covered with river sand, and there are little violet shells. You shall eat my strawberries, for it is I who water them. And no more Madame and no more Monsieur Jean, for we live in a Republic, do we not, Marius? The programme is changed. If you only knew, father, what a sorrow I had; a redbreast had made its nest in a hole in the wall, and a horrible cat killed it for me. My poor, pretty little redbreast, that used to thrust its head out of its window and look at me! I cried at it, and could have killed the cat! But now, nobody weeps, everybody laughs, everybody is happy. You will come with us; how pleased grandfather will be! You will have your bed in the garden, you will cultivate it, and we will see whether your strawberries are as fine as mine. And, then, I will do all you wish, and you will obey me."

Jean Valjean listened without hearing ; he heard the music of her voice rather than the meaning of her words, and one of those heavy tears, which are the black pearls of the soul, slowly collected in his eye. He murmured,—

“ The proof that God is good is that she is here.”

“ My father ! ” said Cosette.

Jean Valjean continued,—

“ It is true it would be charming to live together. They have their trees full of birds, and I should walk about with Cosette. It is sweet to be with persons who live, who say to each other good morning, and call each other in the garden. We should each cultivate a little bed, she would give me her strawberries to eat, and I would let her pick my roses. It would be delicious, but—”

He broke off, and said gently, “ It is a pity.”

The tear did not fall, it was recalled, and Jean Valjean substituted a smile for it. Cosette took both the old man’s hands in hers.

“ Good Heaven ! ” she said, “ your hands have grown colder. Can you be ill ? are you suffering ? ”

“ I—no,” Jean Valjean replied, “ I am quite well. It is only—” He stopped.

“ Only what ? ”

“ I am going to die directly.”

Marius and Cosette shuddered.

“ Die ! ” Marius exclaimed.

“ Yes, but that is nothing,” said Jean Valjean.

He breathed, smiled, and added,—

“ Cosette, you were talking to me, go on, speak again, your redbreast is dead, then ? speak, that I may hear your voice.”

Marius, who was petrified, looked at the old man, and Cosette uttered a piercing shriek.

“ Father, father, you will live ! you are going to live. I insist on your living, do you hear ? ”

Jean Valjean raised his head to her, with adoration.

“ Oh yes, forbid me dying. Who knows ? Perhaps, I shall obey. I was on the road to death when you arrived, but that stopped me. I fancied I was recovering.”

“ You are full of strength and life,” Marius exclaimed, “ can you suppose that a man dies like that ? You have known grief, but you shall know no more. It is I who ask pardon of you, and on my knees ! You are going to live, and live with us, and live a long time. We will take you with us, and shall have henceforth but one thought, your happiness ! ”

"You hear," said Cosette, who was weeping fearfully, "Marius says that you will not die."

Jean Valjean continued to smile.

"Even if you were to take me home with you, Monsieur Pontmercy, would that prevent me being what I am? No. God has thought the same as you and I, and He does not alter His opinion. It is better for me to be gone. Death is an excellent arrangement, and God knows better than we do what we want. I am certain that it is right, that you should be happy, that Monsieur Pontmercy should have Cosette, that youth should espouse the dawn, that there should be around you, my children, lilacs and nightingales, that your life should be a lawn bathed in sunlight, that all the enchantments of Heaven should fill your souls, and that I who am good for nothing should now die. Come, be reasonable, nothing is possible now, and I fully feel that all is over. An hour ago I had a fainting-fit, and last night I drank the whole of that jug of water. How kind your husband is, Cosette! You are much better with him than with me!"

There was a noise at the door; it was the physician come to pay his visit.

"Good day, and good-bye, doctor," said Jean Valjean, "here are my poor children."

Marius went up to the physician, and addressed but one word to him, "Sir?"—but in the manner of pronouncing it there was a whole question. The physician answered the question by an expressive glance.

"Because things are unpleasant," said Jean Valjean, "that is no reason to be unjust to God."

There was a silence, and every chest was oppressed. Jean Valjean turned to Cosette, and began contemplating, as if he wished to take the glance with him into eternity. In the deep shadow into which he had already sunk ecstasy was still possible for him in regarding Cosette. The reflection of her sweet countenance illumined his pale face, for the sepulchre may have its brilliancy. The physician felt his pulse.

"Ah, it was you that he wanted," he said, looking at Marius and Cosette.

And bending down to Marius' ear, he whispered,—"Too late."

Jean Valjean, almost without ceasing to regard Cosette, looked at Marius and the physician with serenity, and the scarcely articulated words could be heard pass his lips.

"It is nothing to die, but it is frightful not to live."

All at once he rose—such return of strength is at times a sequel of the death-agony. He walked with a firm step to the wall, thrust aside Marius and the doctor, who wished to help him, detached from the wall the small copper crucifix hanging on it, returned to his seat with all the vigour of full health, and said, as he laid the crucifix on the table,—

“There is the great Martyr.”

Then his chest sank in, his head vacillated, as if the intoxication of the tomb were seizing on him, and his hands, lying on his knees, began pulling at the cloth of his trousers. Cosette supported his shoulders and sobbed, and tried to speak to him, but was unable to do so. Through the words mingled with that lugubrious saliva which accompanies tears, such sentences as this could be distinguished. “Father, do not leave us. Is it possible that we have only found you again to lose you?” It might be said that the death-agony moves like a serpent; it comes, goes, advances toward the grave, and then turns back toward life; there is groping in the action of death. Jean Valjean, after this partial syncope, rallied, shook his forehead as if to make the darkness fall off it, and became again almost quite livid. He caught hold of Cosette’s sleeve and kissed it.

“He is recovering, doctor, he is recovering,” Marius cried.

“You are both good,” said Jean Valjean, “and I am going to tell you what causes me sorrow. It causes me sorrow, Monsieur Pontmercy, that you have refused to touch that money, but it is really your wife’s. I will explain to you, my children, and that is why I am so glad to see you. Black jet comes from England, and white jet from Norway; it is all in that paper there which you will read. I invented the substitution of rolled-up snaps for welded snaps in bracelets; they are prettier, better, and not so dear. You can understand what money can be earned by it; so Cosette’s fortune is really hers. I give you these details that your mind may be at rest!”

The porter’s wife had come up, and was peeping through the open door; the physician sent her off, but could not prevent the zealous old woman shouting to the dying man before she went.

“Will you have a priest?”

“I have one,” Jean Valjean answered.

And he seemed to point with his finger to a spot over his head, where he might have been fancied to see some one; it is probable, in truth, that the Bishop was present at this death scene. Cosette gently placed a pillow behind Jean Valjean’s loins, and he continued,—

“Monsieur Pontmercy, have no fears, I conjure you. The

six hundred thousand francs are really Cosette's! I should have thrown away my life if you refused to employ them! We had succeeded in making those beads famously, and we competed with what is called Berlin jewelry. For instance, the black beads of Germany cannot be equalled, for a gross, which contains twelve hundred well-cut beads, only costs three francs."

When a being who is dear to us is about to die, we regard him with a glance which grapples him, and would like to retain him. Cosette and Marius stood before him hand in hand, dumb through agony, not knowing what to say to death, despairing and trembling. With each moment Jean Valjean declined and approached nearer to the dark horizon. His breathing had become intermittent, and a slight rattle impeded it. He had a difficulty in moving his fore-arm, his feet had lost all movement, and at the same time, as the helplessness of the limbs and the exhaustion of the body increased, all the majesty of the soul ascended and was displayed on his forehead. The light of the unknown world was already visible in his eyeballs. His face grew livid and at the same time smiling; life was no longer there, but there was something else. His breath stopped, but his glance expanded; he was a corpse on whom wings could be seen. He made Cosette a sign to approach, and then Marius; it was evidently the last minute of the last hour, and he began speaking to them in so faint a voice that it seemed to come from a distance, and it was as if there were a wall between them and him.

"Come hither, both of you, I love you dearly. Oh! how pleasant it is to die like this! You too love me, my Cosette; I felt certain that you had always a fondness for the poor old man. How kind it was of you to place that pillow under my loins! You will weep for me a little, will you not? but not too much, for I do not wish you to feel real sorrow. You must amuse yourselves greatly, my children. I forgot to tell you that more profit was made on the buckles without tongues than on all the rest; the gross cost two francs to produce, and sold for sixty. It was really a good trade, so you must not feel surprised at the six hundred thousand francs, Monsieur Pontmercy. It is honest money. You can be rich without any fear. You must have a carriage, now and then a box at the opera, handsome ball-dresses, my Cosette, and give good dinners to your friends, and be very happy. I was writing just now to Cosette. She will find my letter. To her I leave the two candlesticks on the mantel-piece. They are silver, but to me they are made of gold, of diamonds; they change the

candles placed in them into consecrated tapers. I know not whether the man who gave them to me is satisfied with me above, but I have done what I could. My children, you will not forget that I am a poor man, you will have me buried in some corner with a stone to mark the spot. That is my wish. No name on the stone. If Cosette comes to see it now and then, it will cause me pleasure. And you, too, Monsieur Pontmercy. I must confess to you that I did not always like you, and I ask your forgiveness. Now, she and you are only one for me. I am very grateful to you, for I feel that you render Cosette happy. If you only knew, Monsieur Pontmercy, her pretty pink cheeks were my joy, and when I saw her at all pale, I was miserable. There is in the chest of drawers a five hundred franc note, I have not touched it, it is for the poor, Cosette. Do you see your little dress there on the bed? do you recognize it? and yet it was only ten years ago! How time passes! We have been very happy, and it is all over. Do not weep, my children, I am not going very far, and I shall see you from there. You will only have to look when it is dark, and you will see me smile. Cosette, do you remember Montfermeil? You were in the wood and very frightened; do you remember when I took the bucket-handle? It was the first time I touched your pretty little hand. It was so cold. Ah, you had red hands in those days, Miss, but now they are very white. And the large doll? do you remember? You christened it Catherine, and were sorry that you did not take it with you to the convent. How many times you have made me laugh, my sweet angel! When it had rained, you used to set straws floating in the gutter, and watched them go. One day I gave you a wicker battledore and a shuttlecock with yellow, blue, and green feathers. You have forgotten it. You were so merry when a little girl. You used to play. You would put cherries in your ears. All these are things of the past. The forests through which you pass with your child, the trees under which you have walked, the convent in which we hid, the sports, the hearty laughter of childhood, are shadows. I imagined that all this belonged to me, and that was my stupidity. Those Thénardiers were very wicked, but we must forgive them. Cosette, the moment has arrived to tell you your mother's name. It was Fantine. Remember this name—Fantine. Fall on your knees every time that you pronounce it. She suffered terribly. She loved you dearly. She knew as much misery as you have known happiness. Such are the distributions of God. He is above. He sees us all, and He knows all that He does, amid his great stars. I am

going away, my children. Love each other dearly and always. There is no other thing in the world but that ; love one another. You will sometimes think of the poor old man who died here. Ah, my Cosette, it is not my fault that I did not see you every day, for it broke my heart. I went as far as the corner of the street, and must have produced a funny effect on the people who saw me pass, for I was like a madman, and even went out without my hat. My children, I can no longer see very clearly. I had several things to say to you, but no matter. Think of me a little. You are blessed beings. I know not what is the matter with me, but I see light. Come hither. I die happy. Let me lay my hands on your beloved heads."

Cosette and Marius fell on their knees, heart-broken and choked with sobs, each under one of Jean Valjean's hands. These august hands did not move again. He had fallen back, and the light from the two candles illumined him : his white face looked up to heaven, and he let Cosette and Marius cover his hands with kisses,—for he was dead. The night was starless and intensely dark ; doubtless some immense angel was standing in the gloom, with outstretched wings, waiting for the soul.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

THE GRASS HIDES, AND THE RAIN EFFACES.

THERE is at the cemetery of Père-Lachaise, in the vicinity of the poor side, far from the elegant quarter of this city of sepulchres, far from those fantastic tombs which display in the presence of eternity the hideous fashions of death, in a deserted corner near an old wall, under a yew up which bind-weed climbs, and amid couch-grass and moss,—a tombstone. This stone is no more exempt than the others from the results of time, from mildew, lichen, and the deposits of birds. Water turns it green and the atmosphere blackens it. It is not in the vicinity of any path, and people do not care to visit that part, because the grass is tall and they get their feet wet. When there is a little sunshine the lizards disport on it ; there is all around a rustling of wild oats, and in spring linnets sing on the trees.

This tombstone is quite bare. In cutting it, only the necessities of the tomb were taken into consideration ; no further

care was taken than to make the stone long enough and narrow enough to cover a man.

No name can be read on it.

Many, many years ago, however, a hand wrote on it in pencil these lines, which became almost illegible through rain and dust; and which are probably effaced at the present day.

Il dort. Quoique le sort fût pour lui bien étrange,
Il vivait. Il mourut quand il n'eut pas son ange ;
La chose simplement d'elle-même arriva,
Comme la nuit se fait lorsque le jour s'en va.

THE END.

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